

T H E
C H R I S T I A D:
A N
H E R O I C P O E M,
In S I X B O O K S.

Written by MARCUS HIERONYMUS VIDA;
And Translated into English Verse:

Corrected, and Improved from the former Translation;
and rendered Conformable to the Word of God.

*Immortal VIDA! On whose honour'd Brow,
The Poet's Bays, and Critic's Ivy grow:
Cremona now shall boast thy Name;
As next in Place to Mantua, next in Fame.*

POPE.



W O L V E R H A M P T O N:
Printed for the AUTHOR, by G. SMART.
M, DCC, LXXV.

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ARGUMENT of BOOK I.

John the Evangelist attempts to give an idea of the nature of God; the birth of Christ; the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son; the Trinity of the Persons, and the Unity of the Godhead. He then mentions the creation of the Angels, the rebellion of some of them, and the formation of Man. Next follows an account of the Hebrew nation down to the birth of the Virgin Mary: Her arrival at the age of womanhood. An Angel orders her parents to choose for her an husband among their own tribe; the which being convened for that purpose Joseph is selected for her husband, who, finding her pregnant, resolves to divorce her, but is soon convinced of her fidelity by the appearance of an Angel, relating to him the manner of her conception, and the greatness of the fruit of her womb. Thus satisfied, he and his virgin bride pay a visit of three months to her cousin Elizabeth, wife of Zacharias the priest, and mother of John the Baptist. Cesar (Augustus) registering his subjects, Mary repaired with her husband to Bethlehem to be enrolled, and is delivered of the child Jesus in a stable. The Shepherds salute him with hymns, the eastern Kings with gifts. Joseph relates her purification, with Simeon's prophecy concerning their child. Their flight into Egypt to shun the massacre of Herod; their return after Herod's death; and concludes with a description of finding Christ in the temple, disputing with the Doctors, and of his changing water into wine.

T H E
C H R I S T I A D.
B O O K I.

IN the begining the Almighty Sire,
 Nature's sole source, held o'er all an empire;
 Struck out no stars, the Ether to adorn;
 Produc'd no world as yet, nor was time born:
 The azure plains, no streaming light o'er flow'd,
 What ever then existence had was God.
 The Sire is God, so is his only Son;
 Two Gods to hold them, yet with caution shun:
 As the same God-head in them common flows,
 So the two persons but one God compose:
 The love that proceeded from Sire and Heir,
 We name the Spirit, and as God revere.
 The Father, Son and Holy Ghost, we own,
 Three distinct persons, and the God-head one.
 This Holy Ghost, fans Ether, Earth and Seas:
 And all things flourish by his sacred breeze.
 Hence Man's Creation; to whose ample sway,
 Jehovah gave the Earth and azure Sea:
 The brute creation bends to his domain;
 The tribes that glide with fins along the main:
 The feather'd crowd that wing the airy space,
 And all the dreary mountain's savage race:
 To him, and to his line, the seats were given,
 Which once the Angel Rebels held in Heaven.

A

He

He saw all nature blooming for his use,
Solely prohibited one trees produce :
But soon enamour'd of the fruitful boughs,
And too submissive to his pressing spouse ;
(Herself the Serpent's prey) in a sad hour,
He broke the mandate of the supreme pow'r.
The fruit prophan'd no sooner by his taste,
Than he, who pours the storm thro' Ether's waste,
Thro' red'ning clouds bids claps of thunder break,
And wrathful seems his vengeance to awake ;
Which Adam bore, and all his race shall bear,
That drink the lustre of the solar sphere.
Hence to hard toil was humankind betray'd,
Hence sprung sad care, and death his gate display'd :
Diseases ghastly, stalk'd with pining grief,
Base want and famine, hopeless of relief.
Was Man obedient, he had felt no care,
But breath'd thro' many years this vital air.
Then men unskill'd and thoughtless rang'd the fields,
Untutor'd in the good that order yields.
Howe'er, they mov'd their God by victims slain,
From storms to shield their flocks and bladed grain.
Two thousand years their state unvar'd ey'd,
At length God gave his vengeance to subside :
For in Olympus, tho' they found no place,
Yet still to civilize the wand'ring race,
The Supreme Pow'r refin'd them by advice,
Struck out new laws and modes of sacrifice :
Our tribes he formed ; the knife to mark them glow'd
With blood, that from the circumcision flow'd.
Then with the future truth the bards dissent,
On the rejoicing world their numbers spent :
Beneath Earth's circle in a dark retreat,
The pious souls mean while devoutly wait :

The

The purple dawn of the redeeming days,
Once the fond subject of prophetic lays;
With hands uprear'd they beg the Supreme Sire,
To put a period to his burning Ire;
Nor for the devious fault of one deface,
From the expanded Earth the human race.
Spare, Almighty! spare, was the gen'ral cry,
Give us at length to claim the promis'd sky.
Our father Abra'm of the Hebrew line,
Who first enacted laws and rites divine;
Engender'd Isaac, who to manhood bred,
Enhanc'd with Jacob his connubial bed.
Jacob with twice six peers prolific shone,
Whom founders of our twice six tribes we own:
Above his brothers Judah held a place,
For pious actions, and a num'rous race,
Enjoy'd the realm, which to his portion came,
And stil'd the land Judea from his name:
But to descend into the midst of things,
Hence David sprung, the Sire of Israel Kings;
From him, as from our origin, our line,
With blood sublim'd thro' fourteen monarchs shine.
Hence a maid, the fairest of the Hebrew fair,
With my whole course of love to fill your ear;
Call'd Maria, in Nazareth was bred,
And the sole fruitage of her parents bed;
To win her heart, a many suitors strove,
But of fair chastity, smitten with the love.
The joys of Hymen, she averse declin'd,
And in the fane her virgin vows enshrin'd:
Her mother, Anna, Venerable dame,
Full of hereafter, and the prophet's theme;
That from her virgin daughter soon should spring,
Egregious for his deeds, a future King;

Who should his sway o'er many nations hold,
So Heaven decreed, and so the bards foretold.
Often a voice descending from the skies,
While sleep in influence shew'd on her eyes ;
Bad her the nobles of her tribe convene,
And for her daughter chuse one of the train :
But tho' to womanhood arriv'd the maid,
Still no regard was to the vision paid.
At last in the full azure of the day,
The voice was to the parents heard to say :
" To bind in Hymen's bands, your daughter haste,
Nor for a distant son, your moments waste ;
But of your blood, an husband soon provide,
Break off delays, and crown your maid a bride :"
Thro' the small towns flies soon the swift report,
And soon conven'd the kindred youth resort ;
The virgin's mansion echoes with the band,
Each flush'd with hope to gain the virgin's hand.
Joseph, led by proximity of blood,
Amid the crowd of rival suitors stood ;
That he might hail the fortune of his friend,
Who should the virgin's nuptial bed ascend :
For far from him advanced in hoary age,
With sprightly bands a rival to engage :
While all with hope of success from the clouds,
They rush'd into Joachim's hall in crowds :
Where rose an altar, awful for its age,
And where he us'd the Godhead to aswage :
Built by our race, and sacred by their fears,
Was held in reverence for three hundred years,
Before this altar prostrate they implor'd,
The great Jehovah, and the Angels Lord ;
Placid to mark by some sure signal given,
The husband he design'd from his high heaven ;

In

In the midst stood fearful, the beauteous fair,
With eyes dejected, and disordered hair;
A blush suffus'd her face with crimson glows,
Like the pale lilly, blended with the rose:
So stood the virgin, 'mid the circling train,
Her God invoking in a plaintive strain;
And much attesting God's wing'd tow'ring choir,
She yielded, tho' averse to her desire.
Her Sire kiss'd off her fear, and dried her eyes,
And taught her soon the mandate from the skies.
Her mother Anna, rev'rend for her age,
Full of the God, heav'd with an holy rage;
Approach'd Joseph, unworthy of such grace,
She fix'd her eyes, and look'd upon his face:
Seizing his hand, for thee alone she cries,
The maid is destin'd by the starry skies.
All stood amaz'd, yet none among the band,
Envy'd his honour of the Virgin's hand.
Joseph, still conscious of his hoary head,
His presence wail'd, and shun'd the nuptial bed.
The faithful youths against his coyness rise,
And press him to receive the offer'd prize:
Joseph persuaded, then lamenting led,
To rites connubial, the lamenting maid:
Tho' willing not to crop the virgin's pride,
To sooth her grief with soft words Joseph try'd:
When drawing from her breath the long breath'd sighs,
In accents sweetly plaintive, thus she cries:
Within me dwells some virtue from the skies,
And pure religion prompts me to despise,
The nuptial bed, and chastity pursue,
With love perpetual to her merit due;
For tho' the Prophets my resolves oppose,
With other mandates, tho' my mother glows;

Still

Still I possess an order which defeats,
My mother's raptures, and the Prophet's threats :
Wherefore shall Jordan sooner seek its source,
And the wild stars desist their vagrant course,
Than I shall light the nuptial torch to fume,
My virgin mind, stain'd with its grosser gloom :
She said: Her sorrow swelling into tears,
In large round drops her gen'rous cheeks besmeers:
A creeping horror seized Joseph's frame,
Trembl'd his knees, night veil'd a visual beam ;
And lo ! a voice descending from the skies,
In awful and majestic accents cries :
" The joys connubial, to indulge forbear ;
But guard thy spousal vows with holy care."
Joseph arose, and gazing on his bride,
At length with painful pauses, thus repli'd :
Say, Virgin, candid say, 'gainst Heaven's command,
Why have I stretch'd to thee a bridegroom's hand ?
Who has (the nuptial joys I never sought,)
On my pure conduct such disasters brought ?
A better fate breath'd in my father's strain,
At once a bard, and flamen of the fane.
" On thee he sung, no Hymeneals wait,
Or horror shall attend thy bridal state."
To my resolve a due attention give,
As now, with virgin honour always live ;
Nor shall I dare the sacred union break,
Nor with volatile steps thy dome forsake :
But gaze upon thee, as with parents eye ;
Do thou, with constant love on me rely :
'Tis my department now to bear thy cares,
So wills thy ardor and my riper years.
Pleat'd with the plan, the wedded virgin rose,
And in an inner chamber sought repose.

Untold

Untold, I'll pass my sufferings through that night,
The sleepless horror, and my imagin'd fright.
Entranc'd and lustr'd with a shining beam,
On a soft bed reclin'd the virgin dame :
A crown of stars seem'd on her head to beam,
And vest her temples with a lambent flame :
With light replete, like to a silver moon,
Beneath the virgin's feet serenely shone :
Such wond'rous scenes my mind with horror fill'd,
And while I spoke, my breast with fear as chill'd
O from this maze of wonders set me free,
Almighty Sire ! They own thy deity ;
Thy hand in all these prodigies I find ;
Then placid breathe the spirit on my mind ;
That I, no longer in suspense, may see,
How to pursue and act thy just decree :
I ceas'd to pray : at length the beauteous dame,
Woke from her trance, as from a broken dream :
Her sighs heave sadley, and her eyes besmear,
Her snow-like bosom with a bursting tear :
Aw'd I approach'd, and beg'd in this affair,
She'd make me social in her anxious care :
Then starting from her pause, she thus reply'd :
My joy from thee no longer shall I hide.
Attend ! But where shall I commence the tale ?
Or who'll believe the wonders I'll reveal ?
But I conjure thee, by these gladsome tears,
To guard in silence what shall reach thy ears ;
Nor let it roll abroad, a vulgar theme,
'Till Heaven consigns it to the trump of fame.
The strange events in Prophet's songs foretold,
Pour'd on my mind, and o'er my senses roll'd :
But chief the song, its constant influence shed,
And to my mind, the God, the picture led ;

Which

Which hymn'd the Virgin of a regal race,
Who should bring forth without a man's embrace.
When lo! an Angel comes at God's command,
Heaven in his smiles, a lilly in his hand;
Sparkling the chamber with his rosy wings,
To me this salutation raptur'd sings:
"O thou, more happy than the happiest fair,
Than other mothers, Heaven's more pleasing care:
Olympus King, to dwell with thee prepares,
Collects his God-head, and forsakes the spheres.
Fear not, for God above thy sex more won,
Is pleas'd to make thee mother of his son:
A-son then thou shalt bear, who fam'd shall be,
And ages own him God's own progeny.
Him born a Saviour to the faithful train,
Shall be call'd Jesus in thy native strain.
His soaring fame, and wond'rous acts shall rise,
Above the natives of this earth and skies:
It is ordain'd, he shall the pow'r embrace,
And mount the throne of his illustrious race:
Nor time nor limits shall confine his reign,
And everlasting shall his sway remain."
He said: My fear receding by degrees;
I spoke: My reason starts at these decrees;
For I resolv'd the virgin blush to guard,
Have always free from man, myself preserv'd.
Finish'd my speech: the Angel his resum'd,
With great Jehovah's breath divine perfum'd:
"Without man's commerce pregnant thou shalt be,
And in due time bring forth thy progeny:
A God all nations shall thy offspring call,
And son to him, who rules the worlds great ball.
Of this strange truth, to make all doubt subside,
Eliza, know to thee by blood allied;

Who

Who sterile pin'd, when purpl'd with youth's glow,
Now ag'd expects to feel a mother's throe :
Yet the sixth moon with lustre circles earth,
Since she swell'd pregnant with a future birth :
So great his pow'r, at whose commands I lie,
The King and author of the starry skie."
This having said, he wings the Ether's blue,
Whom thus with eyes and words Mary did pursue ;
" O winged beauty of the azure plains,
I gladly yield to what thy King ordains."
While thus the maid the wond'rous tale pursu'd,
The smiling tears her roseal cheeks bedew'd ;
Of little faith did Joseph praying stand,
Addressing God, but with a supine hand :
For so incred'lous was his stupid mind,
Such prodigies to credit he declin'd ;
Persuaded well, that youth's with studious care,
Weave the fine fraud, frail virgins to ensnare :
That maids of easy faith are too soon won,
Imbibe man's pois'nous words, and are undone.
And now he meditates, Oh direful shame !
His virgin wife for ever to disclaim.
When in his sleep an angel form arose,
The same in looks, the same his sky-spun clothes :
Which to his bride, his starry visit paid,
And bore the message which he now display'd.---
" Offspring of Kings, what crime o'ercasts thy soul,
Canst thou these signs which speak the God controul ?
Suspect no fraud to drop from her pure tongue,
Truth tunes the strain, the sacred Virgin sung :
She has conceived, stranger to human aid,
By God's eternal spirit, pregnant made ;
When God breath'd on her from his lucid dome,
The God-head fled from Ether to her womb.

Boldly

Boldly assent : For on our azure plains,
Pleas'd with our homage, truth eternal reigns.
The Prophets once these miracles foretold,
Their lays obscurely vested with a cloud :
This maid is figur'd by the chrystal gate,
That binds eternal Ethers deep retreat ;
When human traces never print the road,
Frequented solely by the supreme God ;
Whose ingress and egress ne'er violate,
With motions noise, the portal dormant state.
To thee, this maid he yields, who rules the Sky,
But bound by Hymen, Hymen's freedom fly :
Let her through life, thy sage protection share,
Tho' safe beneath God's tutelary care."
He said : and winging Ether fades away,
But glancing through the cloud, strews realms of day.
Spread through the towns of Galilee, now fame,
Sings wond'rous to tell, a venerable dame,
Who lives as recluse, on a mountains height,
And hoary bends, beneath old ages weight :
How with first offspring pregnant swells her womb,
Defam'd as sterile, in her youthful bloom.
This the wing'd Nuncio from the skies foretold,
Which Mary from Joseph did not withhold :
She said, her name's Eliza, of our line,
And on her pregnancy, twice three moons shine.
Pleas'd with the thought, we rise without delay,
And to our kindred dame, direct our way :
Thro' arduous mountains and fatiguing pain,
The Flamen, Zachariah's House we gain.
Scarce we arrived to touch the mansion gate,
When nodding comes the dame, strange to relate,
With fond embrace hangs on her welcome guest,
And in the act, God rushes to her breast ;

B

A

A sudden heat suffuses thro' her frame,
And this the language of the hoary dame:
"Above all other parents parent, blest;
Blest is the burthen of thy ut'rine guest:
Whence these unwonted heavenly graces show'r?
Why on my silver head so smiles this hour?
Which gives me to behold with ardent eyes,
And speak to her, selected from the skies?
'Mid many, parent of the supreme Lord,
Gracing my mansion of her own accord?
At thy approach with rapture throb'd my breast,
And my womb's babe has joy with bounds express'd.
Hail sacred mother, to the God most dear,
For faith conspicuous, and to truth sincere:
Who with glad faith held what the Angel said,
Unconscious of being the mother-maid."
This said, with blushes as the rose replete,
And mildly humble in an high estate:
The holy maid, bedew'd with crimson rays,
Raiz'd to the starry King her song of praise:
Who ey'd her gracious, from Olympus' throne,
Poor, lonesome, humble, and to praise unknown.
Then of hereafter full, she sung the fame,
So often presag'd that should crown her name.
To many tedious would appear the tale,
Should I the portents and the signs reveal:
That on the trembling world, distill'd a fear,
That soon a mighty King would breathe in air:
The Caspian Kingdom heard the bards with dread,
And Nile's rich waves, roll'd to their secret head.
Egypt receiv'd the oracle with frowns,
And eastern realms were shock'd thro' all their towns.
If Fame is true, its said, Ausnian plains,
Resounded horrid with the Prophet's strains:

That soon a King should be the blaze of day,
And o'er the subject world extend his sway.
Strong in his own and father's virtue rise,
And all his people translate to the skies.
Cæsar, (Augustus stil'd) who that time reign'd,
To register his subject world ordain'd.
To go to Bethle'm Joseph did insist,
To have their names rang'd in the Civil List.
The virgin follows, leaves her mansion seat,
The town of Naz'reth gave the safe retreat.
To Bethle'm come, with houses thinly spread,
What time the skies wrap'd in night's shadow fled ;
A lonesome house, the city's walls succeeds,
The roof imbrown'd with turf and marshy reeds,
Apt for the peasant, whom nocturnal gloom,
In town detains far from his rustic home.
They found this cot to weary trav'lers free,
Led on by chance, or rather God's decree:
Who not content his only son should groan,
And feel thro' life, misfortunes, not his own:
But in a stable wild, he should be born,
With want distress'd, and of relief forlorn.
The Ass was fed, whose help made short the road,
And whose fatigue made light the household load.
Next whom, her straw-strew'd bed the virgin press'd,
The Inn too throng'd to number her a guest.
An Ox sheds on her left, his tepid breath,
Whom a poor plowman work'd to till his earth ;
Cutting with crooked plough the side-laid clay,
Nor ceas'd to toil, till ceas'd the live-long day.
He cultur'd with such pains his rented field,
Himself from famine, and his babes to shield.
Now midnight from her summit had declin'd,
And sleep (on a stone Joseph's head reclin'd) ;
Receding

Receding softly from his waking frame,
Op'd on the ambient gloom a visual beam.
He rose, and lo! an infant naked lies,
Reduc'd with rags, and Ether's richest dyes;
Whom on her poor straw couch the mother maid,
Brought forth, exempt from anguish and of aid.
The Ass and Ox on either side admire,
Forget their food, and with their heads aspire.
The mother self, with brightness glad appears,
Her knees bend low, her eyes dissolve in tears;
With hands directed to the suffus'd skies,
Her new-born babe, of drapery bare, she eyes:
Sheep skins he strew'd, for cloths of purple dye,
And forks invert'd a cradle's place supply:
More useful things, and want the night withhold,
The birth demanding scenes superb with gold.
Nor yet night's gloom had chaf'd the blazing day,
When thronging Shepherds, urge their rapid way.
With down-cast eyes they seek the sacred stall,
And prone on earth, before the God-head fall.
Struck with amaze, he question'd how could fame,
Along the fields, the birth so soon proclaim.
When one thus quickly answer'd his demand,
"Shepherds are we, and graze the woody land:
Our usual vigils we nocturnal keep,
To guard from beasts of prey our folded sheep.
What time the world was wrapp'd in midnight shade,
Around our heads a gushing lustre play'd,
And as we tott'ring stood unnerv'd with fear,
This voice was wafted from the void of air:"
"Mortals, fear not; glad tidings I display,
In your confines, a God is born this day;
Who shall restore (as Prophecies relate,)
Mankind from darkness to their pristine state.

In

In yonder town you may behold him laid,
His place a stable, and of straw his bed.
The voice our guide; our eyes we threw around,
And view'd the town, slow rising from the ground."
This said: Amaz'd, they gaze the infants face,
And his bright charms, with eyes and hands embrace.
Tho' they the God-head in the babe contels'd,
And without food and aid, a God is blest;
Yet, as an offspring of a mortal dame,
He breath'd the mortal in a mortal frame:
Inhal'd the moisture of his mother's breast,
And she his infant limbs with drapery drest.
More, to fulfil the rites our law prescribes,
He bore the circumcision as our tribes:
We call him Jesus, mindful of the name,
An Angel bore, wing'd by the Sire supreme:
To mark his Priesthood and his regal race,
The nations name him Christ in Grecian phrase.
And tho no male embrace his Mother stain'd,
Beneath her roof, ~~she~~ forty ~~five~~ remain'd.
The royal maid to her lustration hastes,
And with her infant tends to Salems gates;
We bring a pair of turtles to be slain,
(Our rites so order in the sacred fane.)
The Priest by custom at the altar waits,
His snowy robe descends in flowing plaits;
A mitre of two horns his temple shrouds;
And the watch'd fire meanders high in clouds.
A crowd of children round the altar stood,
And from a chalice pour'd the heifers blood;
Which to the God supreme the Flamen slew,
To stop the vengeance to the people due.
With hands the fages of the nation press'd,
The heifers front, with holy fillets dress'd.

Their fingers blushing with the victim slain,
The Priests the altar lightly thence distain :
The altars flames imbibe a deeper hue,
And ruddy drops the seven lamps bedew.
Sprinkl'd with blood flashes the ample veil,
Whose ambient folds mysterious rites conceal.
Finish'd the rites the Priest prepares to taste,
Join'd with his sons, the sacrificial feast.
And now proceeds, the virgin humbly mild,
Her right hand holds the birds, the left the child,
Shall I rehearse, what signs the heav'nly King,
Struck out, that spoke the child his true offspring ?
How chill'd the Priest, when he the infant gaz'd,
And what new light about the altar blaz'd ?
He aw'd, thrice heap'd with frankincense the flames,
And thrice the fire above the vessel streams :
Yet still according to his country's laws,
From the slain birds, the vital gore he draws ;
Scatters the plumes and o'er the entrails strays,
His face converted to the eastern blaze ?
Then breaks the wings, and on the subject fire,
The crackling entrails into fume expire :
From the burn'd victim grateful vapours rise,
And panchean odours scent the balmy skies.
Another scene inspir'd the breast with fears,
And awe seiz'd Simeon bent with hoary years ;
Than whom, no man among the cities crowd,
With fairer homage, to strict justice bow'd :
Th' almighty spirit of the bending sky,
Into hereafter, granted him to pry ;
And said, he should not cease to see the day,
'Till he the promis'd Saviour should survey.
For worn with age, he would consign to death,
Life's painful labours, and his panting breath ;

But

But the fond hope, to view the source of life,
Gave him to live, and second nature's strife.
With holy instinct now distends his breast,
And feels, that God now dwells the temple's guest.
Thou in the Fane, exults the rev'rend sage,
And clasps the infant, with an holy rage:
With liquid eyes, big with the pearly tears,
He in these words his joyful sense declares.
"Jehovah born, Almighty infant hail,
The splendid author of this world's great weal!
Thou com'st to wash away the people's stains,
With the rich fluid of thy precious veins;
And to their manes open a liquid way,
To the bright realms of eternal day:
Welcome to earth: Now to thy words comply,
Father supreme! 'tis granted me to die.
Now from this body's close confinement free,
In peace dismiss me from life's misery.
Since on me streams the Gentile's light divine,
And the new glory of the Hebrew line!"
Now to the dame this fond address he pays;
Who can thy mein assume or sing thy praise?
To thee what thanks can pour the sickly earth,
Who brought Salvation by this happy birth.
Yet still this fruitage of ethereal love,
To many Hebrews shall destructive prove;
The time approaches, when your heart shall feel,
Oh sad and joyless time! The dol'rous steel:
When you unhappy shall be join'd to woe,
And Jordan's troubled wave retorted flow,
Then late and heavy shall arise the day,
And measure with sick looks its pallid way.
(The earth herself shall joy to leave her pole;
And thro' the void, her weight rejecting roll.)

This

This said : As merr'd in sudden sleep and tir'd,
He clos'd his eyes, and smiling soft expir'd.
All look aghast ; but from amazement free,
We stand serene, vers'd in the great decree ;
Yet painful we revolve the sages word,
That to the mother points the naked sword :
Anxious to know to whom the child should be,
The fatal origin of misery.
But time too soon, the dubious truth reveals,
The present scene, the menac'd woes details :
Unless for us some deeper wounds remain,
And ills are pointing with acuter pain.
About that time, three Kings forsook their state,
And hither bent their steps from extreme east.
And to the infant, ample presents bore,
Myrrh, breathing frankincense, and golden ore :
The sphere revolving thro' its starry signs,
Proclaim'd a Monarch born in our confines ;
Whose sceptre should the skies and earth obey,
And whom to see they march'd a tedious way.
A star hung in the skies, a faithful guide,
Illum'd their passage with a blazing tide.
The town obtain, they bent without delay,
To tetrarch Herod's gate their glowing way :
Their message told, thinking, as he was King,
The Royal Babe to be his own offspring.
Struck with amaze, with chilling fear unman'd,
Lest this strange royal heir should seize the land :
Herod dispatch'd a Nuncio in haste,
To bid the bards the royal presence wait.
Of the new-born infant, the time and place,
He curious asked, his country and his race.
Bethle'm, they cried, the birth by fame should boast,
Whose crown and deeds should sway the starry host.

Now more confounded in the maze of cares,
He strove to smoothe his brows and veil his fears;
And to dismiss the Eastern Kings with grace,
He thus reply'd, with well dissembl'd face.
Monarch's, the cause which hither urged your way,
Has always on us stream'd hope's smiling ray.
No dearer object than this child can rise,
Whom Prophets promis'd, inspir'd from the skies.
The City Bethle'm borders on this place,
Of Structure old, and peopl'd by our race:
Thither to seek the Royal Babe command,
And when confess'd, to us a Nuncio send;
That to the child our homage we may pay,
And in our gifts our regal sense display.
Such joyful words dropt from the tyrant tongue,
While round his heart a dreary envy clung:
Mad, that Heav'n's Monarch, whom the stars obey,
Should dwell on earth, and bear a regal sway.
The star beheld, the Easterns seek the town,
Of Isra'lites environ'd with a Crown.
Now on the roof the star's long trowels cease,
And all the cot streams dimpling with a blaze.
The Monarchs rob'd in gold and crimson vest,
Prostrate on earth, the infant God profess'd.
While next the dame, thus bow'd the royal band,
Each pour'd his treasures with a lib'ral hand.
Before the door, in long procession wait,
A courtier train, who swell the pomp of state;
While steeds with cov'ring glowing to behold,
Paw the rent earth, and champ the polish'd gold.
Their homage paid, exulting they pursue,
The star, its progress, stain'd with blazing hue:
Advis'd to flie the regal city's gate,
Far on the right, they roam from Herod's feat,
Who

Who, furious with the fraud, an army calls,
And secret sends to Bethle'm's hated walls :
To seize by night, when all creation rests,
And slay the babes that suck their mother's breasts ;
That in the infant crowd the royal heir,
Might fall a victim and the carnage share.
O'er Joseph asleep, hover'd a voice by night,
To shun the bloody scene, and haste his flight,
The Dame and Child convey, (the voice exclaims)
And seek the Nile which parts in fourteen streams :
There dwell, (~~and~~ ~~that~~ land remote from thee,)
Not thence remove, until recall'd by me :
For Tetrarch Herod with ambition wild,
Now meditates the slaughter of the child.
Joseph arose, this speech to her reveal'd ;
Her limbs grew languid, and her visage pal'd ;
Run here and there, while haste retards her flight,
And scarce can trust the shadow of the night.
There she, unhappy felt the sword of woe,
And all the pain that can from torments flow.
They rose and soon depart the trait'rous town,
And plunge indevious paths with horror brown.
Thro' palmy woods, and old Elusa tend,
And high Idume's panting brow ascend.
Mapsa received 'em ; famous for her oil,
Which parts the Asian from the Libyan soil ;
They enter'd then great Pharaoh's large domain,
On whose spread fields descends no soft'ring rain ;
Whose natives found the ethers vivid force,
The stars the lunar orb, and solar course.
Along strange floods they moved mountain's seal'd.
And near to towns with turrets pointed fail'd.
Tho' now the babe inhales a foreign air,
They yet to Egypt's farthest parts repair ;

Fearful with dread, where safety largely reigns,
And think no place too far from Herod's plains.
Displeas'd they fly Hermopoli's proud seats,
And Thebes seem'd dang'rous with her hundred gates.
Their travels, Memphis to a period brings,
Illustrious for the tombs of Egypt's Kings :
A friend receiv'd 'em in his cottage seat,
Indeed an humble, but a safe retreat.
Along the coasts, where Nile expands its stream,
In sadly solemn dirge, sings mournful fame.
That Bethle'm's town deplore's her babe offspring,
(Slain by the mandate of Palestine's King)
Who innocent in vain, with tender cries,
Cease with their lives to breath the lustred skies.
Pressing her child the mother-maid turn'd pale,
Her mind struck with the image of the tale ;
For fancy brings the bloody scene to view,
The tears the slaughter from the nation drew :
The matrons's shrieks, that pierce the pitying air,
While thro' the town they roam'd in wild despair ;
The earth with vital purple that abounds,
And houses streaming with infantile wounds.
Hence sadly true appears the Prophet's strain,
Of many should the infant prove the bane.
The slaught'ring day gleams yet in fancy's eye,
And from the childless mothers draws the sigh,
Not long the author of the barb'rous deed,
Surviv'd the children he ordain'd to bleed :
For soon his limbs with foul corruption seiz'd ;
He di'd, unpity'd, as he liv'd unprais'd.
O'er Joseph asleep, again the image glides,
And bids him leave Nile's monster-bearing tides
Back to their country, mindful of the way,
The mother and the infant straight convey.

This

This done, his mother as she pli'd the loom,
Oft saw celestials soft invade the room :
To sooth the child appear in human forms,
Improve with studious labour all his charms :
In wild rotations revel on the wing,
And shade him with the product of the spring.
Yet sweetly mild he yielded to her sway,
And all her words was ready to obey.
'Till rip'ning time his vigour shou'd improve,
To spread his father's glory and his love.
No signs divulg'd him to the public ear,
Till he of life attain'd the twice sixth year :
His virtue then impatient to subside,
Spreads o'er Judea's town a radiant tide.
Religious to our tribes shines out a day,
That Joseph to his great town bends his way ;
The Royal maid departs her sweet abode,
Her child attends, companion of her road.
The homage paid : their travels they repeat,
Fond of retiring to their humble seat :
Their wearied steps the solar beams illumine,
And o'er the skies, night casts a pitchy gloom :
Before the absence of the child they spy,
Who silent fled his mother's guardian eye.
'Mid friends they trac'd the fugitive with pain,
And the roads vocal with his name in vain.
From the sad mother gushed fast the tear,
And down her iv'ry neck wild flow'd her hair :
The confus'd locks her neck's pure whiteness grace,
And tears sublime the beauties of her face.
With Joseph reluctant, the sad mother strays,
And thro' the town, they sought the boy three days ;
The fourth day shines ; at last in fervent pray'r,
Their hopes they fix'd, and to the Fane repair.

The

The portal trod, when they the child survey,
(Of all his future pow'r the first essay)
Rehearsing fervent, 'mid the Priestly throng,
Of each inspir'd bard, the raptur'd song:
Asking the pages obscure sense in vain,
And shedding lustre on each mystic strain.
The vaulted temple with applauses rung,
To hear such language from an infant's tongue:
By art untaught, without experience sage;
A man in wisdom, and a child in age.
Nor less enchanting was his youthful frame,
To view him crowds, of sight insatiate came;
His rosy looks exhal'd an heav'nly air,
Mild beam'd his eyes, and golden flow'd his hair:
His budding childhood had such pleasing pow'r,
Nor yet unfolded blush'd his youthful flow'r.
Fresh drops of light gush'd from his rolling eyes,
Bright as a star new rising from the skies:
Caught with his beauty, nature smil'd serene;
For breathing loves resulted from his mein.
From this first scene sparks of envy rose,
And for the boy struck out a train of woes;
For malice seiz'd the Sage's hearts that hour,
Who rag'd to view, and fear'd his growing pow'r.
Hence now the wrath that thro' the town proceeds,
And hence the flames, that urge to bloody deeds.
Of Omens full, the youth was oft implor'd,
Frugal of life, to fly the hostile sword:
But mountain tow'rs lye veil'd as soon by light,
And blazing summits burn obscur'd by night;
As virtue can, forgetful of a name,
Evade the plausible voice of plummy fame.
Of all his actions, none more rous'd their rage,
Than when six lustres had matur'd his age.

The

The stream obedient to the pow'r divine,
Deep blush'd transfigur'd into rosy wine.
About that time a friend by blood ally'd,
In holy marriage gave his virgin child;
With whom the youth was call'd a welcome guest,
To share at once and grace the nuptial feast.
While round the genial board the Nobles lay,
And with the feast indulg'd the bridal day.
The menial train in wild confusion roam,
And whisp'ring murmurs eccho thro' the dome:
That the broad casks, an empty space confine,
Void of the cause of mirth, the gen'rous wine.
Touch'd with the fortune of the wedded fair,
Mary implor'd her son their wants to hear.
He seem'd disturb'd, but soon inclin'd to aid,
Won by his mother's vows, the bridal maid.
The train he orders six large urns to fill,
With water flowing from a gargling rill.
Soon as the stream was offer'd to his view,
Into a blush it chang'd its pallid hue.
Bewilder'd with the change our eyes we roll,
And quaff for water pure the purple bowl.
Lo! of his infancy a slight portrait,
And of his deity, the first essay:
Nor is there cause his other deeds to name,
By them this country is extoll'd by fame:
But if you wish to hear a fuller state,
He can the best (regarding John) relate.
Who present view'd each glorious wonder blaze,
A true attendant on his master's ways;
While a less glorious, but a pleasing care,
Joseph confin'd to wait his wedded fair.

END of the FIRST BOOK.

ARGUMENT of BOOK II.

THE Birth, Preaching and Baptism, of John the Baptist. A Narrative of that part of Christ's Life, which speaks him a God; wherein among many other Miracles, John the Evangelist recites the Widow's Son, and Ruler's Daughter. The Calling and Chusing of the Apostles and Disciples; together with the feeding of the multitude in the Desert, and Christ's Fasting, and being tempted in the Wilderness.

T H E
C H R I S T I A D.

B O O K II.

GOD sent his Son from the Ethereal Throne,
 Made Man for Man's transgression to atone:
 But unconfess'd on earth, lest he should stand,
 Or be expell'd, an exile from the land;
 Himself, proclaiming God's own progeny,
 Forbidden by the statutes of the country.
 He sent a Bard his advent to proclaim,
 A native of these regions, John by name;
 Whom to Zacharia, Eliza bore,
 Sterile her womb, her head with old Agehoar.
 He lab'ring with a Prophet's sacred throws.
 To the glad world the God incarnate shews.
 In infancy he from the world retir'd,
 With love of woods and brooks, and mountains fir'd:
 His mansion was deep caves with horrors rude,
 Uncultur'd shrubs bore fruitage for his food.
 Or hollow trunks their honey wild distill,
 And for his cup clear rolls the lucid rill.
 Religious to the sight, his frame appears,
 Rough vested with a camel's shaggy hairs.

D

Yet

Yet tho' a solitaire he pours his strains,
To mountains, sandy shores, and desert plains;
But Woodland shades can't quench fair Virtue's beam,
The vicine towns soon catch the hermit's fame;
On him, as wafted from the skies, they gaze,
(The theme divine of Sybil's raptur'd lays);
Who should, from shades o'ercast with dreary night,
Translate the human world to fields of light.
And now full crowds invade his wild retreat,
His race demanding, business of his state:
Was he the one, who from the skies should glide,
To succour wretched man, at once, and guide?
He cry'd, beneath his Sylvan bow'r reclind,
Hear and rejoice, you race of human kind;
Long have you stray'd, imbrown'd with night's dark hue,
The light now dawns, you wish'd so oft to view;
But spare to view me as the promis'd flame,
(For all deserving honours I disclaim.)
As Luna doth precede with slender ray,
The matten sun, and faint announces day:
So I foretel your flood of radiance shines,
And God himself shall visit your confines:
The God shall on your mortal plains be seen,
Confess'd a mortal in his frame and mein:
At his approach your festal joy display,
With blushing carpets strew his sacred way;
Your verdant fields with flow'ry chaplets dress,
And in your holy pomp the God confess.
Righteous mean while, and moral be your fame,
And let me leave your follies in the stream.
With the celestial spirit, he will clean,
Guilt's first contagion, and each sinful strain:
Then the whole world with wonder shall behold,
Itself transfigur'd to an age of gold.

These

These words pronounc'd, the neighb'ring towns
descend,

Where Jordan's streams along the vallies bend :
The skies imperial, they for peace address,
And all their faults spontaneously confess.
With hollow palm the Baptist scoops the waves,
And with the stream, their naked bodies laves.
The God in private mixes with the band,
And for lustration seeks fair Jordan's strand ;
That he might (vested with a mortal frame,)
The rites perform, that man's attention claim.
That after ages need not blush to share,
The solemn duties, which employ'd his care.
Soon as the Lord had 'mid the water shone,
The Baptist's visual orbs the Godhead own :
And while his hands are rear'd to Ether's beams,
His suppliant knees compress the wond'ring streams.
Absorb'd with rev'rence, he declines to shed,
The lustral moisture on his sacred head :
But passive soon to the divine command,
He laves his body with a trembling hand :
With lustre purpled, Jordan's streams appear,
And peals of thunder, rend the ambient air :
Lo ! from the skies a dove directs his flight,
His wings with gold, his back with silver bright.
Sloping his blazing course, his plumage spreads,
And breaths his holy influence on their heads.
The Father's lays along olympus run,
Impassion'd with the love he bears his Son.
Meanwhile a youthful band of Heaven's bright sphere,
On wings incumbent press the crowded air.
Are charg'd with drapery of a snowy hue,
In act their Sovereign's mandate to pursue ;
Quickly to dry his darling Son's moist frame,
And tresses, dropping with the sacred stream.

The God when he had shar'd the holy rite,
Forfakes the tumid flood, and steals from sight,
At whose recess the Baptist pours this strain,
To all the banks throng'd with a num'rous train:
The God is come, he dwells on earth behold,
By all desir'd, and oft by me foretold;
Mild as a lamb, on incens'd altars slain,
Who by his blood shall wash each human stain:
A willing victim to his Father fall;
Then own your God, and on your master call.
John th' Baptist no longer haunts woods and groves;
But now from town to town incessant roves:
Distilling on the ear in raptur'd strains,
The promis'd God treads earth, the god-head reigns!
But few believ'd, till God himself proclaim'd,
By deeds, above the reach of mortals fam'd:
For thirty years the Lord himself conceal'd,
His deeds obscure, his god-head unreveal'd:
But first he calls twelve friends among his train,
To share his fortune and laborious pain.
Nor think he fix'd on them of lineage great,
Or taught by nature, or by art deceit:
His choice were men, whose veins roll'd vulgar gore,
Of manners simple, and in fortune poor.
Among them five, from small Bethesda came,
Employ'd to lure the fishes from the stream,
With guileful hook, or launch into the main,
Where scaly shoals enrich the wat'ry plain.
When he desir'd we should attend his core,
I, John, was nets repairing on the shore.
My brother James observ'd with watchful eye,
Lashing the shore with panting life, the fry.
Andrew and Peter near us plough'd the stream,
Brothers, the same their thought, and art the same.

Philip

Philip likewise, by blood to me ally'd,
Left at the call his nets and briny tide:
Thomas and Thaddeus next increas'd the train,
And Simon from the Galilean cane.
With the like art, whose breast was wont to glow,
Fond of the flood and to the fish a foe.
And Alpheus, James by blood to Simon dear,
Before this time had join'd the social care.
Behold, a list of an inglorious race,
Names harsh to hearing, and of accent base!
Nor we alone appear of horrid mein;
Three also at the summons join'd the train.
Matthew, who glories in no better line,
Whose hoary tresses next to Peter's shine.
The list Bartholomew and Judas fill,
Judas, the horrid instrument of ill.
Scarce can I count the wonders which my eyes
Gaz'd on, or ears imbib'd with deep surprize;
In a short space, for only three years roll'd,
Since he embrac'd me in his chosen fold.
Who shall this ocean of his deeds essay?
I will, however, for instance now obey
Tho' hard the task, exhibit unto view,
And draw from crowds of progenies, a few.
To tell his actions therefore I'll forbear,
Wrought in the vicine towns which reach'd man's
Ear.

For all this coast, with soaring fame proceeds,
Illustrious with the glory of his deeds.

(Has not Bethania's vales, with palms embrac'd,
Her ruler lately ey'd from death releas'd?
On whose remains, in darksome tomb out-spread,
The sun four days his mourning influence shed.)

What

What numbers has he call'd from death's drear gate,
How many snatch'd from all devouring fate?
Equals the task, to tell when Boreas roars,
The waves that froth the sands that strew the shores,
As to rehearse the throngs with languid breath,
Who morbid fought him, and return'd with health.
What groups of blind, of deaf born men, what swarms,
Whose ears ne'er heard, nor lips drop'd vocal charms!
The lame to seek him bend their limping way,
And carriers those of moveless limbs convey:
With ulcerous bodies some polluted glow,
And putrid juices from their members flow.
Those guileful draughts in their swell'd frames instil,
Whose thirst nor streams can quench, nor human skill.
While these their limbs with trembling palsy weak,
Beneath the burthen of their bodies shake.
In some the fever rages thro' their veins;
Some lie, their members torn with unknown pains.
In others, while disturbing furies rise,
The mind destroy, and redden in the eyes.
The sad diseases shun his holy sight,
Or from his touch wing swift their baleful flight.
The patient hence exalts his healthful head,
And bounds rejoicing from his sickly bed.
And hence his walks contain a morbid train,
The road, the forum, and the sacred fane.
The dead felt not his pow'r, 'till Sidon's land,
Gave him to lofty Naim with his band.
A range of lights in long procession flames,
And thro' the town a dewy sadness streams:
Now on his bier a mournful corpse appears,
A beauteous youth dead in his bloom of years.
The ghastly white spreads o'er his pallid face,
Blots out the crimson of each youthful grace.

The

The wretched mother, with her sorrow wild,
Roams thro' the city, and laments her child.
Sanguine with mangl'd cheeks her hands appear,
And down her back dishevell'd flows her hair.
Touch'd with her mein, and wounded by her cries,
The matrons swarm, and fill with shrieks the skies.
The men deplore by soft compassion led,
The childless mother, and her widow'd bed.
When the God saw the corpse with paleness fade,
And the soft down the youthful features shade;
He bids the tears to cease, the pomp to stand,
And mooving sooths the body with his hand.
Life moves the corpse; and wond'rous to the eyes,
Amid the crowd the youth is seen to rise;
Forfakes his bier, and with a soft embrace,
His parent clasps, and bids her sorrow cease.
A few moons after, he from deaths drear shade,
To blooming life restores a beauteous maid;
All vital heat and breath forsook the fair,
And flying vanish'd into common air.
Jairus, the Virgin's Sire, the wonder ey'd,
Jairus rich, facund, and the people's pride.
Touch'd with a friend's distress he bids the stream,
To wine transvers'd assume a rosy flame.
The sun begun to shoot his western rays,
When on a mountain plac'd, the Lord surveys.
Of males and females, a promiscuous knot,
Themselves forgetting, and their cares forgot:
Who of his person fond, forsake their homes,
And with him rush into the desert's glooms.
With tender pity mov'd, he here delays,
For on their fast three suns had spent their blaze.
No corn stood near, nor towns to purchase meat,
Nor was the fruitage then matur'd by heat.

By

By chance a boy is found, who five loaves bore,
And two small fishes, his nutritious store.
Which his fond mother, to support his ways,
Involv'd in balmy grafs, and myrtle leaves.
But what were these to feed a num'rous train?
And now his friends sad with despair complain.
His little senate he to soothe them forms,
And into hope, their fears thus mildly charms.
Tho' in the subject vale vast numbers stray,
None shall retire unsatisfied this day.
Then to the ground without delay he falls,
And on his Sire supreme thus reveren'd calls:
Hail mighty parent! By whose suns and rains,
All things with food the fecund earth sustains:
If once in wilds thou fedst the Hebrew race,
By shielding banquets from the heav'nly space.
If to no feed creation owes its birth,
And once were nothing, Ether, Seas and Earth;
Propitious hear, dire famine chase away,
Nor let so many thousands be her prey.
He ceas'd to pray; and on the grassy plain,
Out-spreads, with hunger keen, the num'rous train;
Then placid cuts the loaves with nicest care,
And strictly deals to each his scanty share.
The little portions in their hands embrac'd;
Augment and swell into a gen'rous feast.
The knowing rage of hunger now sedate,
With copious liquids and mirac'ulous meat;
Of ample size twelve baskets scarce contain,
The copious scraps that of the feast remain.
Another wonder lately was display'd,
A tree diffuses wide a leafy shade.
Beneath it oft the weary trav'ler stood,
And drain'd the fruitage of their sparkling flood.
Imbrown'd

Imbrown'd with dust our Hero pass'd that way,
And sought to quench his thirst, the blooming spray.
In vain: The tree with barren branches waves,
And spends its juices in luxurious leaves.
His disappointment flashes on the boughs,
And the tree feels the terror of his vows.
Instant I saw the tree and branches die,
And the leaves circling in a whirlwind flie.
Nor to his pow'r less subject are the seas;
The waves do swell, or rest, as he decrees:
I saw fierce Boreas on the billows wild,
Subdue its rage, and at his word breathe mild.
Scarce has bright Cynthia thrice her circle roll'd,
Since on the sea a midnight tempest growl'd;
Smooth flow'd the waves, in whispers blow'd the wind,
When first with nets we sought the scaly kind.
But soon the waves our shatter'd bark o'er flow'd,
And death on each contending billows rode.
When lo! our chief, whom on the distant shore,
We left attentive to the surges roar:
Comes treading light the surface of the main,
Secure amid the wat'ry hurricane.
Our eyes at the approaching figure fade,
Doubtful to judge it solid or a shade.
So swiftly without oars he skim'd the main,
Till he confess'd himself in this soft strain:
Whence flow your fears, and why your hope subside?
Hence in my words hereafter ne'er diffide.
He ceas'd, and mounts the bark, the sinking prey,
To the devouring fury of the sea:
Forbids by nod the raging storm to blow,
And free from threats, the surges gently flow.
The storm thus hush'd, with swiftest oars we glide,
Safely to shore, along the dimpling tide.

E

The

The harbour gain'd, an event soon befel,
Wond'rous to view, and stranger still to tell;
The Magistrates, on our arrival stood,
On the green margin of the briny flood.
Claiming by custom due, the yearly fee,
Impos'd on each by antient King's decree.
While they delay'd his placid speech to hear,
Christ whis'pring drop'd these words in Peter's ear;
Haste hence and cast the line into the seas,
And the first fish the fraudulent hook shall seize;
Dissect: The victim soon shall drop to view,
What shall absolve the debt to Cæsar due.
The Sage obeys: The prize now beats the shore,
Within whose jaws sparkles the tribute ore.
Arising horror always writhes my mein,
As often as my mind calls o'er this scene:
Culling of late some fish cast by the flood,
A man of furious mind beside me stood:
His eye ball thrown about with wildness gleam'd,
And from his mouth a frothing moisture stream'd:
If Fame tells true, a lawless Hymen led,
His guilty parents to the genial bed.
Their joys to taste forbidd'n by our rite,
What time the land to mourn, the tribes invite;
But they enjoy'd not long their foul delight;
The crime commenc'd and ended in one night:
For 'mid his joys the base adult'rer dies,
And, into air his wicked spirit flies.
When urg'd her throes, from Ether shot a flame,
Was lambent round about the lab'ring dame.
And was not snatch'd from her cut womb the birth,
Both had at once, resign'd their lives in death.
Their brother's orphan child the sister nurs'd,
Who with the pain due to his parents curs'd,

His

His eyes with light, nor ears with sounds were fill'd;
Nor human accents from his lips distill'd.
But when arriv'd to youth's vermillion age,
He foam'd with madness and infernal rage.
An hundred Pests from Erebus' dark shade,
On his weak mind an hundred furies prey'd.
Thro' his deep throat (who can the tear refrain?)
They pour their shouts, and wake their howling pain.
And when chance freed him from his guardian's hands,
His irons broken and his knotted bands.
All shun'd the shocking and the foaming fight,
And ghastly sought their roofs with head long flight.
Thro' devious mazes now he joy'd to roam,
Forgetful of his friends and native home.
Chose, social with the brutes, the sylvan gloom,
Lodg'd in some rocky cave, or mould'ring tomb.
Thus poor he rang'd the wilds with haggard eyes,
And with his naked body brav'd the skies.
This wretched man, his hands fast bound with chains,
His friends and kindred led, by cogent means.
Before the Lord: That touch'd with his distress,
He might perhaps his misery redress.
But scorning aid, he strove his bands to tear,
While his fierce cries ascend the starry sphere:
So rag'd the youth; at length his friends with pain,
Before the God, the captive wretch constrain:
His holy aid, they lowly bending sue,
To calm his spirit, and his rage subdue.
The pious Chief, with hands rear'd to the skies,
Invokes his father to his enterprize:
When lo! a prodigy both strange and foul,
Dogs seem to bark, and rav'nous wolves to howl.
The furious wretch such bellowing clamours pours,
Loud, as from mountains rush the headlong show'rs.

Now ratling chains do seem the ear to wound,
And Earth and Heav'n return the direful sound.
While the God chides the horrid fiends delay,
Within the wretch they trembling sue to stay.
Why God's true son, thou bid'st us to retire,
From this man's body, subject to our ire?
Grant us at least to invade this bristl'd band,
(A herd of swine then graz'd beside the strand.)
Nor plunge us into gulfs with shades imbrown'd,
Nor into nether earth's opaque profound.
He nods consent: Lo! by the furies seiz'd,
The swine rove wild, with madd'ning pangs diseas'd,
So rages keenly sharp each inward guest,
The herd stray furious, and enjoy no rest;
Then head long plunge into the azure plain,
And in the waves extinguish life and pain.
The youth mean time his captive arms unbound,
His weary'd limbs diffuses on the ground.
Biting the earth with prostrate visage lies,
And as expiring draws the painful sighs.
To whom God's offspring tends, and with his hands,
His eyes discloses, and his ears expands:
His eyes view light: Lo! from his tongue words glide,
And in his heart the frequent throbs subside.
With Christ's applause, crowds wound the bright
abode,
Jehovah born, confess him, and a God.
What can't his pow'r perform? at his command,
We chase diseases from the morbid band;
Sickness retires soon from our present aid,
And many disappoint death's gloomy shade;
Nor studious art we boast, nor mortal care,
From painful beds the languid group to rear.

But

But bid fair health invade the rosy frame,
By calling thrice upon our master's name.
Among the host that fought us to be heal'd,
On one alone our invocation fail'd:
The more we strove to chase the hellish guest,
The fiercer pangs he roul'd within the breast:
When God assistance brought, by goodness mov'd,
Our little faith in him he disapprov'd:
Would you from bodies cast such fiends, he cries?
From food abstain, with pray'r rend the skies.
Nor shall this pow'r on you alone be shed,
But every one who shall my glory spread.
(If his faith staggers with no dubious air)
Each wond'rous action may securely dare.
Mountains will change their place at his command,
And head-long rivers with attention stand.
Go then, resolv'd in stable faith confide,
And the bright seed of radiant truth spread wide.
Sprinkle the night sepulchred earth with rays,
And be mankind's and affus'd nature's blaze.
Thus having spoke: seventy men he chose,
To share our labours, and to feel our woes.
Yet his heart throb'd with sighing grief replete,
So few the actors, and the task so great.
How oft men's thoughts and latent cares he told,
Which God alone could possibly behold.
Our dubious minds, our vain and tacit fears,
He angry ecchoed in our wond'ring ears.
When his foes glow'd with direful vengeance blind,
And dread destruction labour'd in their mind.
He oft display'd their schemes with ire replete,
And all the frustrate rancour of their hate.
Nor is the woman's cure unknown to fame,
Who twice six years pin'd with a sanguine stream.

Exhausted

Exhausted now with her diseases pain,
She sought by touching Christ her health to gain;
While round him youths and rushing people stream,
She mov'd behind and touch'd his robe's extream.
Lo! at her touch her old distemper flies,
And to retire unseen she vainly tries:
But God soon felt the trembling flying fair,
And with soft counsel fill'd her listning ear.
These wond'rous acts resulting from his nod,
And others, which I saw, acclaim the God.
His mortal nature yet he ne'er forgot,
And willing bore the woes of human lot,
Our model to pursue: For oft at feasts,
He mixes chearful with the chosen guests:
In council when the citizens convene,
He's often pleas'd to join the civil train:
And when the nation 'gainst him furious rise,
He, as a man, their hate and temple flies.
The cavern seeks, while impotently loud,
The foes assault, shap'd like his frame a cloud.
But when John's recent murder Fame had told,
Scarce yet has Sol his annual measure roll'd.
With whose lop'd head the King distain'd the floor,
His brother's ravish'd spouse urg'd to restore.
The Lord, I mark'd, impatient to recede,
From town and crowds sought quick the woods deep
shade.
Nor Hell's grim King, base foe of human kind,
From right who labours to divert the mind;
Abstain'd his double nature to annoy,
The God to scorn, or manhood to destroy.
Our Chief once fled his friends and waiting band,
And gain'd the summit of a shady land.

Twice

Twice twenty suns sat on him without food,
Twice twenty nights their starry courte renew'd.
The prince of darkness thought the present hour,
Most apt his baleful vengeance then to pour.
First to his aid he call'd a numerous host,
From the sad borders of th' infernal coast:
But when he found his malice vainly shed,
He shock'd the horrors of his beastly head.
His hopes of hurting now in words confide,
And from his lips these artful accents glide.
I own thy birth divine, thy self a God,
And all things are obedient to thy nod.
Why suffer famine o'er thy limbs to spread?
But sudden change these ambient rocks to bread.
The God perceives the fraud, and thus replies,
Not on sole bread my mortal frame relies;
But on my Father, whose repeated strains,
Chase foods desire, and hunger's gnawing pains.
He said: tho' conquer'd in his first essay,
The foe desists not, and renews the fray;
Insults on insults, ardently repeats,
And tho' repell'd, thrice urges his deceits:
With lust of rule now strives his mind to fire,
And quench with love of praise his pure desire.
To stop the frauds foreseen, the God forbears,
And gives the foe to forge his fruitless snares.
To lead him passive to the temple's spire,
And to rough rocks, whose brows in air retire.
Just when the foe with hope delusive smiles,
And thinks to reap the harvest of his wiles.
Our Chief begins his God-head to display,
And drags the lurking mischief into day.
With schemes defeated, and with anger fir'd,
The foe stalk'd fierce, and from the god retir'd.

Sent

Sent from his Sire a thousand angels wing,
The skies, and to their God refreshment bring.
Along the Coasts of Sidon once he stray'd,
A weary trav'ler, in the midnight shade,
Desir'd beneath their roofs his limbs to rest,
But the barbarians heard not his request.
(Tho' conscious of his foes, he deign'd resort,
Their dames, and seek the roofs of bad report.
If by advice he might subdue their pride,
And taught truths walk, their passions might subside.
So Zaccheas, Matthew, and a thousand more,
Forsook their former, for a better core.)
Our Chief was led by error, yet who thought,
This practice charged as a contagious fault.
But he to minister his healing aid,
In search of patients thro' the city stray'd,
Weeping their state; from minds offus'd with night,
He chas'd the clouds, and gave celestial light.
(A task most pleasing to the angel-choir;
And to their God, the angels mighty fire.)
Likewise an ear to female tales he deigns;
For lately passing o'er Samaria's plains,
By chance he spies approaching him a dame,
From Sichar's antient walls to scoop the stream;
He sues her suppliant her vase to fill,
And tastes the bounty of the limpid rill:
Who sonorous rivers, and the sea domains,
And the vast globe bedews with copious rains:
At whose command the thirsty crowd to save,
Rocks liquid grew, and pour'd a bounteous wave.
Mean while our wonder swells, in thought conceal'd,
But, her admonish'd, and her faults reveal'd.
The Lord delivers from profoundest night,
And laves with beams of never fading light.

The

The pious fires full of parental care,
Oft brought their train of youths and virgins fair.
To have their hearts with love of virtue fir'd,
And their young minds with gen'rous thoughts inspir'd.
By words and acts he chiefly shew'd the hate,
He bore to minds with tow'ring pride elate.
I, and my sociates, as our chief we sought,
Reclin'd our weary limbs beside a grot:
O'er whose dark gate, an awful elm high weaves,
An arch of branches, and a waste of leaves:
Consuming time, we mutually demand,
Who should superior be among our band;
Who by our hero was the most approv'd,
The most regarded, and the best belov'd.
Soon as he saw us at the grotto's gate,
With knitted brows he bids us to relate,
The subject (strange to tell) of our discourse,
And of our clam'rous strife the native source.
Our pride subsiding, silent we remain,
So warm was our dispute, the theme so vain.
Then sudden in the midst he leads a child,
Void of ambition, and in desires mild;
None can, says he, ascend the happy skies,
But who scorn pride, the love of fame despise;
For them alone, the sky its gates displays,
Who like this child feel not the throbs of praise. —
But at my mother's pray'r my blood pale runs,
The chiefeft honours suing for her sons:
That when the mansions o'er the skies he gain'd,
And with his mighty fire coequal reign'd;
Then next him we on either side might stand,
One at his right, and one at his left hand.
Not her, (a mother's fondness sure's no crime)
But us, he sudden views with looks sublime;

Justly reproveth with better words and brows,
Who prompted with vain art such simple vows.
To crush the proud, delights the pow'r supreme;
So hateful is the love of praise and fame.
Altho' our Chief is equal to his Sire,
Since in external acts they both conspire;
Still when the muse to him her voice would raise,
He to his father paints the song of praise;
And owns, as man, he dares no enterprise,
Unless assisted from the lofty skies.
Hence those, who from diseases pain he freed,
He often charg'd to hide the wond'rous deed.
Who by his nod the lepers sores could heal,
From public praise his virtue to conceal;
Oft sent the patients to medic'nal streams,
To lave the tabid ulcers from their frames.
Shall I relate what people and what towns,
That ardent wish'd he would accept their crowns;
Off'ring to him the royalties of empire,
The robe, the sceptre, and the sacred fire:
He was by frequent pray'r, urg'd by his band,
By arms to seize, and rule the Syrian land;
Then all that ground the victor should obey,
Lash'd with the surges of the ambient sea.
Soon then the broad-spread earth new laws should own,
And ardent pay her homage to his throne.
To shun the instance of each fervent vow,
He flies and seeks the mountain's airy brow.
With livid envy yet and baleful hate,
They cruelly conspir'd our hero's fate;
They drag'd him so, amidst such furious cries,
As if their walls were scal'd by enemies.
But to obey his Sire, a painful store,
Of base insults he serenely bore.

For

For he might 'scape beneath night's friendly shade,
Yet to the spies, he twice himself betray'd.
Aw'd by his voice, I saw them bending prone,
And heard the ground by their prostration groan.
Soon as my ears inhal'd his vocal lays,
And eyes the love that o'er his person strays.
I left my fortune, mother, country, all,
As many have, nor grieve I at my call.
For who are 'honour'd once his toils to share,
In strongest bands for ever bound adhere.
He us'd no words nor promise to deceive,
Nor flatter'd us by fair rewards believe ;
But promis'd all things of the blackest hue,
And the parade of our misfortunes drew.
Nor has his promise fail'd, condemn'd to roam,
We wander exiles, poor, without an home.
Such groves of ills bud low'ring on our eyes,
That new disasters on disasters rise.
One shall (who e'er he is consign his breath,
In peace, free solely from a cruel death.
But, for the rest of his obedient train,
A diverse store of sanguine fates remain.
He bids, mean while, ourselves and riches scorn,
And aid the sick, the famish'd and forlorn :
Dare to be poor, and by long custom bold,
With social arms adversity infold.
Hence many did behold our bodies strewn,
Along the fields, and sleep upon a stone :
Or crop the teeming ears, fatigu'd with toil,
And comfort hunger with the undress'd spoil.
If any thursty land a fountain gave,
We prone scoop'd with our hands, and quaff'd the
wave.

To speak incessant, if an hundred tongues,
I had join'd with the aid of brazen lungs;
I could not still, beneath our Chief disclose,
What toils we calmly suffer'd, or what woes.
For tho' unequal to our cares we stood,
Our strength some time consum'd for want of food:
Above the wealth of Kings our souls still shin'd,
And tho' in body poor, yet rich in mind.
Nor less new crowds approach you may behold,
Ambitious in his train to be enroll'd.
Matrons with hoary Sires, the same's their will,
The same their certitude, his band to fill.
Our hero oft the pressing crowd evades,
To mountains flying, and sequestred shades.
Once trav'ling, I record, beside a coast,
The banks throng'd thick by an unusual host;
He seiz'd a boat, whose cord loos'd from the strand,
He launch'd to sea, an arrow's flight from land:
There stop'd, and ey'd the crowded shore and plains,
Address'd the people in celestial strains:
The sacred walk of righteousness he shew'd,
And softly pointed out fair Ethick's road.
The captive throng on ev'ry accent hung,
And list'ning heard the accent of his tongue.
The sea whose waves, but now wild beat the shore,
Teaz'd with the winds, ceas'd, (while he spoke) to roar.
(Groves the birds greencells, without motion stand,
Their branches shading deep the winding strand.)
But hoary dames, mean time the silence break,
Surpris'd such sacred truths to hear him speak:
With clam'rous joy pronounce his mother blest,
And blest the moisture trickling from her breast:
Blessing the womb that gave him to our dawn:
And the full breasts his infant lips had drawn.

For

For man he taught; from earth and night to rear,
The human soul to Ether's lofty sphere;
To view the streaming radiance of the skies,
And all the fruitless cares of life despise.
Then praises peace: Ye men fair peace pursue,
With gentle vows, and haughty pride subdue;
Humble of mind, above the want of praise,
Honours contemn, and riches flashing blaze.
Known to misfortune, and with little blest'd,
Sustain a life in poverty well vers'd.
Of rosy pleasure fleeting, is the reign;
And nothing's permanent that is terrene.
This earth for you designs no mansion seat,
But plan'd for you more glorious regions wait,
From bodies free, your souls shall glad aspire,
To better worlds, illumed by my fire:
Where plenty overflows, peace smiles serene,
Rest undisturb'd, and pleasures ever reign.
For such rewards how short's the longest toil?
For me, who would not leave this earthly soil?
For wealth so true, for honours so sublime,
Contend above the waste of chance or time.
Religious be, a mutual softness shew,
And feel with melting hearts each others woe.
Forbid by suff'ring, wrath and hate to rise,
And the vague rumours of the throng despise.
No wound for wound: 'tis nobler to expose,
The cheek once injur'd to repeated blows.
For praise therefore let others point the steel,
And beauteous death by battles purchas'd feel:
To all benign, to foes soft peace proclaim,
So lightly hold the transient noise of fame.
But let the mind face death without affright,
Nor force pervert it obstinately right.

For

For tyrants may the mortal body flay,
And the limbs mangle, to the sword a prey;
Yet still the soul immortal safe remains,
And death defies, superior to its pains.
The fire shall bend, to guard you from his sphere,
And none without his will dare pluck one hair.
Alone him fear: Your pray'rs religious shed,
And worthy of him your oblations spread;
Whom seas obey the land, and fields of air,
And the bright regions of Olympus fear:
The ground embrace, in act of homage prone,
And prostrate breath your vows before his throne.
For after death your souls, if black with stains;
He can commit to hell's infernal pains.
Of food also, mildly seclude the care,
Behold who crop the fields, and wing the air:
No arts them vex, nor future cares confound;
Yet they with garments and with food abound:
Nature's great parent o'er creation stands,
Dealing his aliment with fost'ring hands:
Invests the fields with grass, with flow'rs the mead,
With leaves the trees, and mountains brows with
shade.

Impure desire expel, fraud and deceit,
And view with mod'rate joy the well-spread feast.
All loit'ring leisure from your minds remove;
Another's bed avoid, and lawless love.
Depress your hopes, forbidd'n heights to soar;
And guide your vows, with moderations lore.
With your own store of wealth content behold,
Without a base desire for other's gold.
I shall not now the hateful task pursue,
Or draw th' influence of others faults to view;
But what I say, as mask'd with virtue's veil,
Foul thoughts, deceits, and fraudulent hearts conceal.

From

From the polluted mind such pests erate,
On what's now latent, day shall pour a blaze.
Forbid also the wand'ring eye to roll,
Nor, by spontaneous glances, wound the soul.
Hence to indulge the love of speaking cease,
Destruction oft succeeds the girdle's phrase.
Hence with no falsity your lips prophane,
But with new morals crown'd, a life maintain.
These truths my father told, the living source,
Whence all my words derive their native force.
This said: To Heaven's Monarch he turns the strain,
Who's pleas'd no more with blood of cattle slain:
By pray'rs and vows, sweet peace from Ether bear,
And praying thus he shews the mode of pray'r:
Father supreme! whose seats the lucid skies;
To praise thy holy name, bid nature rise:
Let now at length, the promis'd happy days,
On the desiring nations dart their blaze:
Let mortals homage to thy mandates pay,
As the bright tenants of the sky obey.
Our beings to support, benignly shed,
From Ether's airy height, our daily bread.
O ever good! Let mercy on us flow,
As we forgive the malice of our foe.
Weak to resist, temptation from us chase,
And from all evils, guard the human race. —
Our Chief all these scenes lately had display'd,
What time the night expands her deepest shade;
As we together the same couch had press'd,
My drooping head reclining on his breast:
For oft to catch his soothing words I strove,
And to him clung, the balm of pensive love.
His deeds perform'd along the Jordan's tide,
Or where Judea's Hills in vales subside.

Shall

Shall I relate? What crowds he oft address'd?
His speech was plain, or else in figures dress'd.
Himself the first and final cause he shews,
The path to tread, the fountain whence truth flows;
The vital light, that gives mankind to see,
And us now born a happy progeny.

End of the Second Book.

ARGUMENT of BOOK III.

Christ repairing to Jerusalem, is received by Zaccheus, at whose house a messenger arrives, and announces the mortal sickness of Lazarus: While Christ was going to Bethania to restore him to life, Satan calls a Council to frustrate the great designs of the Saviour. Having left Bethania, he stops at Simon, the Leper's house, where Mary Magdalen comes uninvited, repents of her sins, and is forgiven. As he approaches Jerusalem, he is met and conducted to the city by a band of Youths and Virgins, hailing him with choral songs, the people strewing the way with their garments and flowers. Next follows a description of the Pool of Bethesda, where the Lord restores to Jaïrus the use of his limbs; also a description of Solomon's Temple, whence the buyers and sellers were expell'd. Lastly, Christ leaving the Temple saves Susanna from being stoned to death. He thence proceeds to Mount Tabor: His prayer there, and transfiguration.

T H E
C H R I S T I A D.

B O O K III.

NOW from the throng Christ's chosen twelve he
calls,

The true assertors of his deeds and toils,
When come to palm crown'd Jericho's fair seat,
Zaccheus gives the dome, and spreads the feast,
Who once to please his wicked thirst of gold,
The mazes trod, that miser's plans unfold.
But when his breast confess'd the present pow'r,
And grace descended in a heav'nly show'r.
In diff'rent tides, quick rolls the fraudulent store ;
The suff'ers one, and one relieves the poor.
In woe a herald sudden here appears,
And his sad message wounds the list'ning ears ;
Not far hence, Laz'rus held Bethania's plains,
Wealth swell'd his gates, and regal blood his veins.
The Syrian realms once heard his Sire's lore,
And conquer'd cities bent beneath his pow'r.

His

His welcome portals courted ev'ry guest,
And poorly typ'd their master's lib'ral breast.
Hither the Lord disdain'd not oft to come,
And share the indulgence of the festive dome.
Here oft the clouds that veil'd him, fled away,
And pour'd his god-head flaming on the day.
But when he heard the burthen of the plaint,
That Laz'rus seiz'd with sickness, pale and faint;
Respir'd with painful throbs his gasping breath,
And feebly struggl'd on the verge of death.
The gushing grief rolls streaming down his cheeks,
And to his sad companions thus he speaks:
Since death e'er now, has snatch'd our friend away,
Let's haste our course to call him back to-day.
If now, as oft, the Sire Supreme will hear,
And prove his pow'r by nodding to my pray'r.
He added not; but to Bethania tends.
Environ'd by his train of faithful friends;
Behind, in long procession, crowds proceed,
To view the God perform the wond'rous deed.
Near to Bethania come, Gods offspring ends,
His pious march attended by his friends.
There Virgin Martha, Magdelana there,
(From Magdel's antient town they nam'd the fair.)
With hair disorder'd, and with streaming eyes,
Performing at the tomb their obsequies.
He view'd: Whom when the Virgin saw,
They leave their friends. and from the rites with-
draw.
First pay the homage to his presence due,
Then pour their grief while tears their cheeks bedew.
In tender words, and looks o'ercast with gloom,
Art thou then come to view our brother's tomb?

Who

Who to his aid oft call'd thee noble guest,
While with death's chilling cold he lay oppress'd.
Nor is there room to doubt, had'st thou been here,
He would have now inhal'd the vital air;
But since thy pray'rs are realiz'd in heav'n,
To hope, that he shall live again, is giv'n.
While thus they pray'd, grief melts the standers by,
And from their breasts results one gen'ral sigh.
The chief forbids the crowd the youth deplore,
Intent to free him, and to life restore,
Tho' rolls the fourth sun, since he was no more. }
The town soon ecchoes with the wond'rous fame,
And people come forth to behold the same.
Yea, people eager to detail his skill,
Come down the mountains, and the valley fill.
The tomb approach'd, the youths there form a ring,
Where stands in silent pray'r the Heav'n born King.
With hands stretch'd forth, and with erected eyes,
Invokes his father to his enterprise.
The crowd in silence and surprise, attend,
The op'ning of the wonder and the end.
Twice from his face the shifting tincture flies,
Nods, shake his head, and twice bursts forth the sighs.
When lo! the tomb shakes with a quickning throe,
The sight forbids the gazers blood to flow.
On all their senses pours a dewy tear,
And from the hero draws this vocal pray'r.
Tho' ever present, O imperial Sire!
To give relief and second my desire;
Still thanks most warm are for this favour due
Which paints thy virtue to the people's view. —
In haste, ye servant throng the tomb stone heave,
Tear from the corpse the drap'ry of the grave.

Without

Without delay wide opes the yawning tomb,
And blots the stiff'ning crowd, with horrid gloom!
With looks shot down the vault they trembling eye,
The faded corpse in foul dishonour lye,
And heave with life's insinuating sigh:
Thrice Lazarus come forth, the hero cries,
When from the tomb he stalks and breaths the skies.
The circling train with chilling horror wan,
With inexhausted looks devour the man:
Inhale with greedy ears his rising breath,
Which to the waits the series of his death.
(How the rack'd soul in sad and plaintive cries,
Her consort body with reluctance flies.
What furies in dread shapes display'd their pow'r,
And threat'ning rose upon his dying hour.
With pain the spirits of eternal day,
Chaf'd the foul demons from their present prey.
To this the cluster of rewards succeeds,
That terminate the bliss of virtuous deeds.
The pains the guilty feel complete the theme,
Their wretched fate, and hell's eternal flame.)
The wonder finish'd, by request o'ercome,
The God repairs to Simon's neighbouring dome.
Whose limbs distain'd with leprosy's disease,
The God refind, and bade the fury cease.
While at the board, with grateful viands prest,
Amid the nobles sat the welcome guest.
Unbidden lo! A maid invades the room,
Fam'd for her mein, and texture of the loom.
Her purple robe swell'd rustling in each fold,
With silver cloy'd, and interwoven Gold.
An Orphan left, by both her parents death,
This maid became sole heiress of their wealth.

Religion

Religion to her tender age beam'd fair,
 And blushing honour was her virgin care.
 But by degrees youth revels in her veins,
 And Venus furious in her senses reigns;
 Who in her bosom lights unlawful fire,
 And the broad blaze consumes each pure desire.
 Now lost to all, that grace a virgins name,
 Religion, coynefs, and a vestal fame.
 In pride of womanhood, she joys to roam,
 A vulgar object, from her private dome.
 Shines first at banquets, and theatric scenes,
 And giddy bears not admonition's reins.
 Of her large store of ancient wealth, now vain,
 She meditates, among the youthful train:
 To sooth him into love, whose manly form,
 Above the rest, shall glow with ev'ry charm.
 And now she hears, that one of beauteous frame,
 Hither arriv'd and stil'd a God by fame:
 Her joy, impatient of a long delay,
 To view the same she bends her rapid way.
 But when his mein exhal'd its breathing grace,
 And she inhal'd the lustre of his face;
 When her breast caught his eyes love feeding beams,
 Her former passion sudden she disclaims,
 And feels her heart refine with chaster flames.
 And now seven fire brands, horrid to behold!
 Rush from her form benighted in a cloud:
 Dark as the sparkles, that in gasps aspire,
 From dying taper, and in fume expire.
 Lo! flies, exclaims the God, the foulest fiend,
 Who prey'd upon her heart, and warpt her mind.
 Maria then (such was the damsel's name,)
 New in desire, ~~and~~ now in thought the same;

Religion

Who

Who hither came in conscious beauty bold,
Her bosom blazing with embroider'd gold;
Tears off the glories, that her head surround,
And her bright bracelet twinkles on the ground;
Her tunic spurns, that casts a golden gleam,
Rack'd with the sense of guilt and flush'd with shame.
Prone as the dog, beneath his master's board,
For pity, prostrate, she invokes the Lord.
Clings to his knees, his feet with tears bedews,
And dries with robes, assum'd for other views.
Now from an alabastern urn she brings,
The blended fragrance of Arabia's springs;
The blushing Casia, Nardus od'rous ears,
Amonum sweet, and frankincense's tears.
Fast on his feet, the od'rous streams she pours,
And the air grows sweet with the balmy show'rs.
Pleas'd he receives the homage of the fair,
Her faults absolves, and points to heav'n her care.
Mean while in mournful groupes the patients come,
From neigh'ring cities, and surround the dome.
The blind for sight, the lame for motion cry,
The dumb for speech, the deaf for hearing sigh.
Hither the insane for relief are brought,
Unconscious of their state, as void of thought.
But God distress'd, with each peculiar pain,
Reliev'd, and sent them back a healthful train.
He seeks, departing hence, Jerusalem,
The mighty fabrick of the sons of Shem:
Planter of vines! When earth superior stood,
To the broad surface of the gen'ral flood,
And the check'd ocean in his channel flow'd.
With victor arms the Jebusites then came,
And call'd the captive city by their name.

Here

Here Juda's race, with regal blood elate,
Subdu'd the neighb'ring vales, and fix'd their feat.
Here rear'd great Solomon, with foreign toil,
From of everted shrines the copious spoil :
An awful temple, of stupendous size,
Its airy summit mingling with the skies :
All other fanes their ornaments resign,
To dress this Temple out for rites divine.
(Here, brazen cisterns, dazz'ling to behold,
Here tables shone, compos'd of massy gold :
Here fleecy robes, drank deep the purple dye,
And the stiff vestments glitter'd on the eye :
Altars arose, devote to sanguine rites,
And pendent lamps diffus'd their awful lights.
Here tripods, censers bowls blaze on the skies,
And all the great parade of sacrifice.
Jehovah's statutes sculptur'd deep on stone,
And shrin'd in wood religiously here shone.
Before the King, and in the people's view,
The Priest, within the fane, the victim slew.
In this sole place, the holy pow'r is found,
With ritual gore, to stain the blushing ground :
For Isr'els race, by custom hither led,
Thrice in the year the victim-homage bled.)
The Lord oft to this temple bent his way,
To share the rites, and adoration pay.
When the Messiah near Jerusalem drew,
The tow'rs and columns rushing on the view.
The train of thousands, who his labours share,
Boughs in their hands of palm and olive bear.
The foot precede, behind him move the horse,
And in the mid, the hero takes his course ;
No prancing steed, in pride of trappings drest,
Nor foaming with keen life the hero prest :

Bnt

But to the poor his darling want to shew,
An ass, beneath him, moves his dull feet slow.
(This deed once strung the prophet's sacred lyre,
And from the theme he caught celestial fire.)
Bare was his head; his robe (the work of love,
Which for his youth his tender mother wove)
Flow'd to his ancles, in a various fold,
Tho' worn yet new, not by duration old:
A pair of sandals on his feet he lac'd,
And in this humble pomp the city trac'd.
Before the gate in long arrangement stand,
A choir of youths and maids, a beauteous band:
Twin'd in the virgin's locks the roses breathe,
And with shorn crowns the youths their temples
wreath.

Large boughs of living palm their hands employ,
And their glad hymns flow sparkling with their joy.
All vie, with holy emulation warm,
Who most may view the God's delightful form.
Within the walls, the people form a ring,
And ardent press to hail the Saviour King.
Spears grace their hands, their olives flash their dyes,
And their applauses rattle 'long the skies.
Rous'd with the cries that thro' the city stray,
Quick rose the sages, who the nation sway.
The cause unknown, and struck with deep surprise,
To see large clouds of dust obscure the skies;
Of this uproar demand the sudden cause,
Who leads the crowd, and whence this vast applause?
But those, who thro' his fame the god-head spy,
Augment his train, and swell the rapt'rous cry.
The streets he visits, they with purple strew,
And on the pavement Indian carpets glow.

Some roads are strewed with profusive flow'rs,
And the broad surface swells with crimson show'rs.
Not far he pass'd, when lo! Another train,
Salute his entry in a gladsome strain:
Pleas'd he receives the raptures of their hearts,
And full of wonder from the crowd departs.
A vale subsides among the Umbrageous' hills,
Where spreads a pool fed with perpetual rills.
The city dames for water hither came,
The cattle here quenched their thirsty flame, }
And sickly folks rose healthy from the stream.
Hence after times, as fame divulges gave,
The name Bethesda to the healing wave.
At certain seasons of the circling year,
The morbid patients to its banks repair;
For oft the pool in tumult seem'd to rise,
And spout its azure current to the skies.
And now the sickly groups the pool surround,
Eager to catch from heav'n the bathing sound:
Each views the liquid plain with ardent eye,
And of the breeze, each drinks the softest sigh:
Panting to plunge the first into the flood,
When in the air the waters trembling stood.
Tho' wou'd by all, to him alone, health came,
Who first div'd for it, in the troubled stream.
A band of youths, thus in a lawn's smooth space,
Collect their vigour for the rapid race:
Their feet ready to start, their hearts thick beat,
And for the tedious sign, they throbbing wait.
Hope crowns them all, and with delusive eyes,
Each for himself regards the unwon prize.
Among the sick, one Jetrus helpless lay,
Whose sinews shrunk, whose members dy'd away:

Of

Of antient wealth he flourish'd with a store,
But trusting much in med'cine's saving pow'r;
He tried each virtue of the faithless art,
To string his nerves, and motion swift impart.
But feeble for the task, art flies and leaves,
Pale haggard want, associate with disease.
Near forty years he saw his limbs to fade,
Himself a prey to want, and void of aid.
Whom when the God had ey'd in such distress,
With tender looks, he pours this soft address.
Ah say, unhappy! Why this long delay,
Upon the margin? While the streams convey,
Their balmy moisture, and their healing pow'r,
To all the ills, that in their channels low'r.
Hence home they visit, mindless of their pains,
Strength in their limbs, and spirits in their veins.
Weak Jetrus thus; and while he strove to speak,
His bursting sorrow trickled down his cheek.
I tarnish not the pools salubrious fame,
But while I wait the motion of its stream:
Others more active, than inactive I,
Into the roaring waters headlong flie:
For none to bathe me, his assistance lends,
Want seldom feels the benefit of friends.
To his complaint, the God vouch saf'd an ear,
And said, arise, and to thy home repair.
Nor think these waters have the pow'r alone,
To brace the nerves, and to suppress the groan.
Scarce had he spoke, when lo, before the throng,
Erect stands Jetrus, in his movement strong.
Throws on his back his couch without delay,
And with quick strides he stalks the rapid way.
Another view presents the temple's gate,
Beneath whose ample arch the servants wait,

To sell oblations for the brazen shrine,
To those who labour under vows divine;
Here bleat the flock, whose fleece the day improves,
Here lowe the oxen, and here coo the doves.
When the god saw the traffic in the fane,
And heard rude noise the sacred place prophane;
Inspir'd with holy rage, the hero glows,
And with reproaches deals about his blows:
The whips processions on their backs resound,
And drive the rabble off the holy ground.
These walls are hallow'd, (thus the hero cries,)
And to Jehovah's honour sacred rise:
Which you with mercenary traffick stain,
And cast the God an exile from his fane.
Tho' blood your altars bathes, and life expires,
A sacrifice once granted to your fires;
Such rites the supreme being please no more,
And sheep now pour in vain their vital gore.
Henceforth forbear his purer sight to stain,
With entrails warm of birds and cattle slain:
And now a spotless sacrifice prepare,
And taught new rites of faith, the old forbear.
Dare to be virtuous, in libation show'r,
Your spotless thoughts, and pray the supreme pow'r.
Your mystick modes let these hereafter be,
These be the off'rings to the deity.
This said: he at the altar suppliant bows,
And pays his Sire, in silent pray'r his vows.
And now the Priests with deep resentment rise,
Grief in their hearts and anger in their eyes:
Nor was their furious rage a recent guest,
Nor was their hate a stranger to the breast:
Stor'd in their minds, the ancient cause of ire,
Lay deeply grav'd, and set their hearts on fire.

Yet

Yet still they fear'd their cruelty to wage,
For loth to rouse the mob's vindictive rage.
Instant they leave the temple's inmost seats,
Content to vent their wrath in murm'ring threats.
But while the God before the altar bends,
And to his Sire his soul in pray'r ascends,
About the temple rove his social band,
Struck with its grandeur and the builders hand.
Scoop'd from huge rocks a hundred columns spread,
Their frames high, as their parent mountains head.
Of equal number, and of equal size,
Columns of solid brass resplendent rise.
In the large beams they view the cedars strength,
And the arch'd cieling's everlasting length.
The brazen doors on creaking hinges sound,
And the squar'd marble smooths the painted ground.
(Here into pillars sheets of gold are roll'd,
And tables spread their plains in burnish'd gold.
Bright chariots in the temple votive rise,
Distinct with iv'ry, and with ebon dyes.)
While on these objects the disciples gaze,
The hero paid his tributary praise;
And coming forward silent and unseen,
Thus spoke abrupt with a dejected mein.
Already Solyma the vengeance due,
To all thy deeds, hangs frowning to the view;
This pile so large, this temple so divine,
Shall rush e'er long, to fragments like the pine.
(Whose roots the wind, tearing from parent ground)
A victim humbles to the tempest's sound.
The blood of prophets, envoys of the lord,
Which purpled once your sacrilegious sword,
Or ting'd your rocks, their bodies thrown from high,||
Against you point the thunder of the sky.

Yet

Yet still to save you from impending pain,
How oft I anxious strove, but strove in vain :
To clasp your children in my fond embrace,
As the hen, anxious for her feather'd race ;
The little rovers to her bosom brings,
Panting the mother, in her voice and wings.
Your state, already nodding, soon shall feel,
The civil fury, and the hostile steel.
From dome to dome vindictive flames shall bound,
And human blood run crimson on your ground.
In vain to heav'n ascend repeated vows,
To prop your kingdom, which already bows.
Jehovah hastes the period of your reign,
And in a foreign clime erects his fane.
Thus having told these things, omits the scene,
The hero full of thought departs the fane :
But scarce had touch'd the temple's spacious stairs,
When tumult in loud clamour wounds his ears :
Amid the crowd, behold Susanna's led,
The youthful bride of old Manasse's bed.
Pale are her features, beamless are her eyes,
And down her back her hair disorder'd lies.
Averse, indignant, in her bloom of charms;
Her father plung'd her in the old man's arms.
But now the staining of the nuptial state,
Dooms her unhappy to a public fate.
And here the vulgar, here the youths prepare,
To whirl the stones against the guilty fair.
But when the Priest saw Christ the portals grace,
Instant he bids the execution cease ;
The trembling matron from the crowd withdraws,
And veils his base design in smooth applause.
This dame (says he) has broke the marriage knot,
And faithless to her bed was basely caught :

For

For such a crime, it is by law decreed,
By missive stones, yet how severe ! to bleed.
We, soft interpreter of bards ! presume,
To ask your counsel of the matron's doom.
He spoke, and with delusive hope is fed,
That by his force, of speech the hero's led,
Into a snare, where all evasions vain,
Each passage block'd, and flight a fruitless pain.
For should his tender nature spare the dame,
And wave the death, due to her lawless flame.
He'd soon upon himself the rabble draw,
And suffer as the scorner of the law.
Yet should he, for the crime, pronounce her fate,
He'd then incur the vulgars barb'rous hate.
Himself the Priest, for such suggestion's, hails,
And his breast swells with conquest's flatt'ring gales.
But God shall for himself strike out a way,
(A God, no human wit can lead astray.)
At once from death the wretched wife to draw,
And keep alive the spirit of the law.
Fix'd on the ground a while, he rais'd his eyes,
And to the crowd prepar'd for slaughter cries ;
'Tis true, the statutes which your fires decreed,
Consign to death this woman's fordid deed.
Who ever then a sinless life has led,
Let him first whirl the stone, and strike her dead.
And can one boast among this num'rous train,
By wounding her, a life without a stain ?
While thus he spoke, his looks severely strong,
Olique he glances thro' the waving throng.
In act to write ; who should presume to claim,
In the dames massacre, his spotless fame ?
" A mind unshock'd by actions basely done,
A life crown'd with the palm by virtue won."

Before

Before the crowd the fair stands chill'd with fright,
Her eyes sufful'd with death's approaching night :
Prostrate she sinks beneath her load of care,
Nerveless her knees, her heart cast down with fear.
His tender speech among the vulgar glides,
And all their rage of murder soon subsides :
Each in his mind revolves his actions past,
There views a groupe of ills, and stands aghast.
Among so great a train no man steps forth,
By rectitude of life to prove his worth.
But each as conscious of some moral stain,
By stealth lets fall his stone and leaves the fane.
And now the porch unchoak'd with riot cries,
Off her bound hands, the God, the cord unties.
Dismisses her with words, that veil her shame,
Depart, let virtue cleanse thy tarnish'd fame !
This said : Already the declivious skies,
O'er cast with shade, the trait'rous town he flies.
And willing now, before his instant fate,
To pray his Sire, and secret vows repeat.
Unnotic'd leaves his friends in Tabor's plains,
And the mount crown'd with lofty cedars gains.
None of the train he order'd to attend,
But Peter, James and John, a faithful friend ;
Who meditating stand, and to the skies,
Extend their supine hands and piercing eyes.
And now the son, inflam'd with heav'nly fire,
In extassy addresses thus his Sire.
O father see, tho' innocent I dye,
And meet the pangs of fate without one sigh.
Since such thy will, and such is thy decree,
And since mankind is ever dear to me :
Yet these, who left their friends and native soil,
The follow'rs of my fortune and my toil ;

Indulg

Indulge propitious; and avert the harm,
 Aim'd at their virtue by a lurking arm.
 I dread not human hate, nor do they fear,
 For impious men shall wound them ev'ry where.
 Nor shall my anger or surprise run high,
 To see them tortur'd, or to see them dye;
 To see thee, Father, to compleat their woe,
 In dust to spurn them, and commence their foe.
 No; let thy light'ning, if it is thy will,
 Flash fierce around them, or thy thunder kill.
 (If such the toils, that men to heav'n elate,
 And bring back Nature, to her pristine state)
 At least deny not to my pray'r this grace,
 Let not of Hell's domains the cruel race;
 (Whose hate to human mortals never dies)
 Destroy my social pupils with surprize;
 Seduce them from their lore with wicked arts,
 And pour the love of earth into their hearts;
 Nor in the praise of vice let their tongues roll,
 And strive to blot my image from the soul.
 Soon, too soon, shall these insidious foes,
 (In whose unfated breasts revenge still glows)
 Revolve deceits, o'er baleful projects low'r,
 And wear strange forms to spread abroad their pow'r;
 To seize the harmless, whom they cannot blame,
 And with polluted breath, their breasts inflame.
 But frustrate, Sire, their meditated care,
 May their curs'd schemes evaporate in air,
 And bid them conquer'd to betray forbear. }
 And when my mortal days shall set in death,
 Give some to rise to teach the sons of earth;
 In the firm path of righteousness to move,
 And glow transported with Religious love.
 Will not paternal fondness lend an ear,
 Propitious to his Son's most ardent pray'r? —

Thy Sire's true image, and pow'r of his skies,
Thy fears remove, (the heav'nly King replies,)
The frauds shall ne'er annoy thy chosen train,
Which Hell now meditates thro' its domain.
Let Satan grim, a hundred forms assume,
Spread wide his snares, and cover this with gloom:
My presence shall the treachery disclose,
The frauds detect, and dissipate the foes.
Yet one shall fall a prey, thro' whose dark soul,
Base plots, already in disorder-roll:
Now he, unhappy, weary of the pain,
(The sad reward, attendant on thy train.)
Repents, indignant, of the toils he bore,
Sooth'd with the sweets, which life had giv'n before.
But prior to the world 'twas our decree,
This wretch should fill an apostolick see.
Not mindless of the bards, who sung his fall,
A warning great to those, thou deign'st to call.
The rest the snares shall fly by culture free,
And hold life lightly for the love of thee.
Death shall not fright them with his dreadful mein,
But find them tranquil, when he rules the scene:
Watchful of life, and proud of deaths embrace,
From their hearts gore shall rise a num'rous race:
Yet after the long passion of their fates,
Triumphant they shall fill Heav'n's vacant seats.
Proceed then glorious, and compleat my Son,
The mighty labour, which thou hast begun.
From thy religion see, what crowds shall spring,
Unshaken how their breasts espouse their King.
Ev'n those who now reluctantly obey,
Of speech unpolish'd; shall without delay;
Inhale the breathing of the spirit guest,
And feel conceptions new distend the breast:

In all the pomp of language dress thy law,
And into virtue raptur'd nations awe.
This race extinct, another shall arise,
And spread thy name bright kindling to the skies ;
Thy standard fix on the remotest sand,
Where the waves check the further growth of land.
Yet should by lapse of time, the human race,
Their morals with the stain of crimes disgrace :
Should they by chance degenerate from their Sires,
And studious tread the walk, which vice inspires ;
I will by toils and sad affection try,
To make them fond of virtue, which they flie, }
By ills reform'd all mortals mount the sky. }
Jehovah's voice this sacred measure sings ;
Sailing upon the Zephir's scented wings.
" Behold my Son, behold my joy supreme,
Hear him ye nations, and revere his name !"
The voice here ceas'd : In Heaven the winged throng,
Unite their gladness in a choral song.
At length the hero drops his heav'nly air,
Moves to his friends sepulchred deep in fear ;
Wakes them concern'd in wonder of the scene,
And lives among them in his mortal mein.

End of the Third Book.

ARGUMENT of BOOK IV.

Alarm'd at the honours paid to Christ, and inspir'd by Demon, with malice against him, the Priests and Leaders of the City repair by night to the Temple, to deliberate how to oppose and destroy the Lord. Mean time Satan assuming the garb and mein of Joras, endeavours to withdraw Judas from Christ's party, and betray him to his foes. Nicodemus, one of the father's of the Council, harangues in favour of Christ, for which he is banish'd. Then Caiphas rises, and animates the people against the Redeemer. The tribes are enumerated, who came to Jerusalem at this time to attend and participate of the paschal feast. Christ also comes with the same intent, and after having performed the rites of the season, he institutes the Lord's Supper, washes his disciple's feet, and foretells the treason of Judas, and the denial by Peter. Retiring to Mount Olivet, he is bathed in a bloody sweat: and here Judas betrays him, and delivers him to a ruffian band, who conduct him to Caiphas, in whose house Peter denies his master. In the morning he is brought to Pilate, who confines him as a prisoner in his palace, to save him from the insults of the rabble.

T H E
C H R I S T I A D.
B O O K IV.

BUT blind with fear and anxious for the state,
 The Sages and the Flamens sleepless wake,
 The live-long night, their heart corroding care,
 Forbids their eyes, the balm of rest to share.
 For on their minds in lasting colours shone,
 The Hero's entry in the joyful town,
 The festive honours, paid by youthful choirs,
 The growing rev'rence, which his name requires;
 The climes, which fame o'er shadows with her wings,
 And where the wonders of his actions sings.
 What can they do? each hour more clear the lays,
 Unfold: once sung by bards in ancient days:
 A King should come, who boasts from Heav'n his birth,
 And dwells a man, among the sons of earth:
 At whose approach the Temple's sacred wall,
 And proud Judas' regal state should fall;
 Her altars broke, the temple should deplore,
 Her rites extinct, and off'rings brought no more.
 With such thoughts gloomy, and with fear o'er come,
 Each lurks, obscurely sad, in his clos'd dome.

Should

Should sleepless fame within the night arise,
And sing the city enter'd by surprize;
Within the walls the foe their armies pour,
Burn down the houses, and invade the tow'r;
Soon swells the mob; the road with tumult glows;
Nor know the throng from what the tumult rose:
Terrifick furies from their eye balls gleam,
And from the domes the tapers faintly beam.
Rage leads the rout; while torches pour a ray,
To shew the ghastly horrors of dismay:
Still secret rolls the springs whence flows the fray,
Their minds to rage, their breasts to hate a prey.
Mean while, twelve spirits are order'd to essay,
To draw Christs twelve disciples from his sway;
But these (forewarn'd, by his prescient care,
Of the false project, and destroying snare;)
Their minds maintain by errors scheme unaw'd,
And their breasts bar'd to all the wiles of fraud:
The foes assume an hundred shapes in vain,
O'er the disciples captive minds to reign.
Yet one devoted to the bonds, they wave,
Iscariot Judas sinks into their slave.
This pest and scandal of the chosen band,
Once rang'd with them, to act the God's command.
His fortune left, his friends and native soil,
To share his exile, and his trav'ling toil:
Ready from ev'ry vein his blood to draw,
To promulgate the supreme Sov'reign's law.
But soon grown weary of his holy care,
His enterprize seem'd hard, his toil severe;
And raging, that no fruits his toil attend,
In silence wastes whole days to put an end,
To the submission, which the statutes charge,
And then indulge his pristine life at large:

Impatient

Impatient of fatigue, and lost to fear,
The joyless lot of poverty severe;
To drop his province, he low'rs now in schemes,
Now flight delights, now other projects frames.
Thus wreck'd with cares, and tot'ring now in thought,
Him the black leader of the cohort sought.
Now clad in Galilcan Joras' air,
(By blood was Joras to false Judas dear,)
He thus accosts him as he sleepless lay;
Ah! say, unhappy? Why you nightly stray?
The mountains drear: Why in loud tempests chill?
And waste your manhood at a master's will?
Who (how great's the frenzy, which your mind excites)
Dares boldly to frustrate our holy rites:
Whom none attend, but outcasts of the land,
A Female mob, and semiviral band.
Our nobles with concordant anger rise,
Devoting him to death, a sacrifice:
He, soon, for all his holy rage shall pay,
And all his boasted courage fume away;
Then his feign'd glory of rewards shall fade,
And his thick clouds of cunning drop no aid:
While his fine arts expiring round him lie.
Rise then, and from th' impending carnage flee.
This said; his borrow'd figure melts in air,
Transfixing Judas' breast with rage and fear:
Hence in his mind infernal thoughts preside,
And his pulse beats convulsive with its tide;
Now he revolves the labours which he bore,
And of his dangers past the frightful store;
With sins polluted love now frantic glows,
Fix'd to betray the Sov'reign to his foes.
And now the Priests and Fathers of the state,
Retired to the temples inmost seat:

When

When Caiphas prime Priest (around whose head)
Their mystic rites, the sacred fillets spread :
Ascends the throne in blazing colours drest ;
According to their rank sat down the rest.
Some voices were that Christ should suffer death,
Either by public force, or fraudulent stealth :
Others for sanction call'd, the youth to slay,
Whom lately Christ had rais'd to visit day ;
From the dark grave ; of which the great renown,
Soon for him call'd the rev'rence of the town.
Yet still they fear'd the mob should Christ sustain,
Won by his merit, or his gentle mein.
Here Nicodemus took his ancient place,
Not the last noble of the noble race :
Who solely free from the infernal pest,
Which knaw'd infections ev'ry other breast ;
Yet loth alone the Senate to oppose,
Tho' better maxims in his bosom rose ;
Still once like them, contemning Heav'n's decree,
He strove on Christ to vent his enmity :
But when he found his works a God declare,
Like one, call'd forth from night to breathe the air :
His vows in secret to the God-head pays,
Fearful by publick homage to displease.
But now Christ's blood and life are in debate,
And ev'ry speck is pregnant with his fate ;
Deep pain'd to hear the innocent condemn'd,
He drop'd the mask, and spoke the publick friend.
Fathers, the cause of the debate this night,
Lies not obscure, for want of proper light :
To serve my country then I will disclose,
The real truth, should torments 'round me close :
You must all see, his actions greater rise,
Than a mere man's ; supported from the skies ;

That

That, by his deeds, he proves himself to be,
(If truth can win us,) God's own progeny;
The very God, by bards in former days,
(Big with the God-head which inspir'd their lays,)
So oft foretold, who should for man expire,
And reconcile him to his mighty Sire.
So far we guided by the Prophets say,
Malice can't find a weakness in this plea.
On numbers, whose dull eyes suffus'd with night,
He spread the lucid sparks of visual light.
On some whose ears were from their birth-day bound,
He gave to drink, and pour'd the charms of sound:
The nerveless limbs, o'er spread with livid stains,
The bodies, languid with relentless pains;
To these he gave the lustiness of strength,
To those, the smiles of unexpected health.
Three he has rais'd (the wonders fame has spread)
To breathe the skies, once numbred with the dead:
The late rais'd Laz'rus was the people's theme,
And thro' the City, still vibrates his name;
Weak then the mind is, and obscure the heart,
That would such virtue try to draw from art:
Such wonders flow not from mechanic laws;
Behold a God! A God alone's the cause.
As oft as he pronounc'd an heav'nly strain,
So oft with cunning fraught our words prov'd vain:
Combin'd, he should in death our fury feel,
Our stones we pointed, and we edg'd our steel;
Wrapt in a cloud, he sudden mounts the sky,
And hosts of guardian spirits round him fly:
So shines the God: Who can his vows refuse?
Tho' met for ill, let's rise for publick use;
Approach whom Heav'n had sent, to save by Grace,
Our faults confess, and suppliant sue for peace.

K

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K

While

While thus he speaks, and warm rehear'd the same
He adds a fresher violence to their flame,
Strikes out intenser furies in the soul,
And tides of anger thro' their senses roll.
At length the rage which inward boiling lay,
Obscuring reason's intellectual ray;
Suffusing on the mind a heavy cloud,
Against him bursts, in exclamations loud:
And on him, they with furious anger frown,
Expell'd their temple, and exil'd the town.
Then Caiphas, while rage was mute confin'd,
Arose and spoke the dictates of his mind:
By artful wiles allur'd, no doubt (he said)
This Nicodemus to the foe has fled;
Who often suffer'd in his country's cause,
And dar'd maintain the sanction of her laws:
Who late in all the pomp of language rose,
To stop the rapid progress of our foes.
But such's the magic of the hostile tongue,
That they who hear are by the sound undone:
Shall we believe him come from Heaven's high choir,
To save, who impious boasts our God his Sire:
Who in the havock of our law delights,
And toils to fix a new parade of rites:
Whose advent, he asserts shall fatal be,
To this great temple, which, by God's decree:
Our ancestors had built with so much toil,
And decorated with barbarian spoil?
What's the religion which novelty can frame?
Can morals pure from such religion stream?
Still he, lest any crime should lie untri'd,
The guilty joins, and deals his pardon's wide:
To their bale doors his steps impure conveys,
And scorns our ancient rite of festal days.

As

As he deserves, the vile seducer treat,
Haste, spread your snares, and drag him to his fate.
Extinguish Citizens, his growing fire,
Lest flames victorious to your domes aspire,
Wind round your columns in a lambent train,
And o'er the airy summit blazing reign;
Else shall he gain the city with his arts,
And with sedition warp the people's hearts:
Else soon the country round shall be the prize,
Of his false wonders, and prodigious lies:
Religion else with many ages sway'd,
Shall into nothing, with her altars fade:
I fear that Rome, the insult to repay,
The priv'lege we enjoy, shall take away;
By her dejected, soon compell'd to roam,
Far from our country and our native home.
Let one die then for all, and expiate,
The sins of many, and secure from fate;
Such be th' gen'ral voice, and thus shall we.
The homage pay due to his deity.
This said; the Fathers own'd the penal choice,
And each approv'd it with a furious voice.
But on the means while roll'd the deep debate,
In secret to allure him to his fate;
Amaz'd, they see, before them Judas stand,
Withdrawn unnotic'd from the chosen band:
Aw'd they receive him looking fiercely great,
And 'mid their nobles offer him a seat;
Ardent demand of his approach the cause,
And then to hear in throbbing silence pause.
Then Judas, throwing round his glaring eyes,
Fathers, I know you dread the rage, (thus cries)
Of our Galilean, who spurns your laws,
And is of your sage council now the cause:

But tell the price, and I'll assume the pain,
(Which now employs your tortur'd thoughts in vain)
To give him to your rage an easy prey,
Before the setting of this new born day.
Twice fifteen silver coins, with joyful speed,
They count, A huge reward for such a deed!
Gladly attend his egress from the fane;
He seeks the mountain, and rejoins the train.
Kept sacred in the town and on the plains,
A solemn feast about this season reigns:
Sev'n Suns their holy joy and leisure see,
According to religion's old decree:
Sev'n Suns behold their festive tables spread,
(But yet forbid the use of leaven'd bread)
With the sheep's offspring, and with hasty cakes,
And all the herbal pomp of rural feasts.
This day, with joy memorial, they relate,
Their ancient Sires had left th' Egyptian state,
Had pass'd secure, thro' the seas blushing tide,
Enrich'd with many spoils, and Heav'n their guide.
To view the regal town, vast numbers rise,
From ev'ry part, and share the sacrifice:
Nor in confusion they the highway trod,
But each tribe march'd beneath their leader's nod,
The town now full of Isr'els twice six tribes,
To pay the homage which the time prescribes,
And consecrate the days with festive praise:
To his disciples Christ thus gently says:
Soon will the light begin to streak the east,
When ev'ry house shall brighten with a feast;
Among you who shall to the town first tend,
In search of some rich one, the poor man's friend,
Who may before my fate, with us delight,
To share the banquet, and the annual rite:

Not

Not long your search : You'll see a boy return,
From the clear fountain with a brimful urn,
Observe his motions ; keep him still in view ;
And to the house he tends, his steps pursue :
Ask in my name the master to afford,
A Chapel sacred to the festive board.
There on the tables spread the sacred meat,
There my companions, and my presence wait.
He said : Peter and John the word obey,
And to the city bend without delay ;
Along the city they uncertain roam,
But quickly spy a boy returning home,
With a full urn from a neighb'ring source ;
Soon after him, they bend their hast'ning course,
Thro' various windings, close his footsteps trace,
And with him enter to his mansion-place.
Hither, illustrious for his ancient race,
And for his seven sons of manly grace,
Simon repair'd, join'd by his filial train,
When for the town he left the verdant plain.
He gain'd the town, religious in parade,
To pass the days by custom solemn made :
And while the rites, the servant's care requires,
He sings the actions of his glorious Sires :
But chiefly from the origin he draws,
Of all these banquets and their rites, the cause ;
But as his numbers gently glide along,
Peter arrives and interrupts the song :
We have a King, says he, call'd Christ by name,
To none inferior in a pious frame,
Who bade us come and ask an humble seat,
Sacred to rites and decent for a feast.
When Simon heard, new joys dilate his breast,
And all his doors fly open to his guest.

Then

Then thus he spoke: Let him our mansion share,
Before this time his name has reach'd my ear,
Yet tho' his virtue on Fame's plumage flies,
His voice ne'er blest'd my ears, nor mein my eyes:
But here his presence and his coming wait,
I'll order some to guide him to this seat:
And I could wish he'd fix his dwelling here,
And all th' indulgence of this mansion share;
Then might I boast the honour to my race,
And they point out with joy the sacred place.
And now the Sun shot down the azure plain,
When Christ had gain'd the mansion with his train.
Where all things sparkle with a regal taste,
And the board glows odorous with the feast.
Amid the guests, with well dissembled face,
Breathing feign'd love, Judas assumes his place.
And now the hero takes into his hand,
The purest bread and breaks it 'mong his band.
The wine then blending with the recent stream,
He consecrates it to the Pow'r Supreme.
And as he dealt the holy cakes, he said,
My body's real image is this bread:
Then cri'd, distributing the purple flood,
This cup's the real image of my blood;
Which to my Sire I'll pour a victim slain,
To wash away mankind's infectious stain:
When you shall drain this cup or taste this meat,
The series of my death commemorate.
Such honours to my torments shall be paid,
And their sad memory shall never fade.
He ceas'd to utter more: And from that day,
Mankind, submissive to the mandate, pay,
The holy homage: And instead of beasts,
By ancients slain for sacrificial feasts,

On

On altars consecrate, with rites divine,
The bread mysterious and the sacred wine.
Hunger appeas'd, the hero lays aside,
His ample robe, and studious to provide
The implements of lotion, first displays,
The towels white; next fills a Caldron's space,
With floods of water, which vehement aspire,
Above the margin by the subject fire;
Then scoops the frigid streams, which soon assuage
The turgid eddies of the boiling rage,
Peter, with his companions in amaze,
Exhorts the hero from the deed to cease:
But he, desirous to his train to shew,
The glory of submission, bending low,
Washes their feet, and with the towels dries;
Then pours this sad address in heavy sighs.
The night which I foretold now mantles earth,
And the day hastes to summon me to death.
I'll leave you, friends, and in my death fulfil,
The rigid orders of my Father's will:
There's 'mid you one, believe what I relate,
Who, fraudulent, shall betray me to my fate:
The traitor's breast the furies now inflame,
And his mind labours with the murd'rous scheme.
Can love like mine be crown'd with such base spoils?
Is treason the reward of all my toils?
But let the wretch this fatal truth imbibe,
He shall not long enjoy his bloody bribe;
Soon shall he wish he ne'er had seen the day,
Or with his footsteps mark'd life's flow'ry way.
For you who would my low example try,
In due submission with each other vie;
And while obedience o'er your minds preside,
Look down superior on the pomp of pride.

Nor

Nor shall the crew of hell desist this hour,
A trembling panic in your breasts to pour ;
The courage, vow'd so often, dare to shew,
Now bid your ardor flash against your foe ;
With watchful care provide against their pest,
One night at least forbid your eye-lids rest.
Amaz'd the hero's prophecy to hear,
One genial sigh betrays their common fear ;
And while, the wretch to know, they feel distress,
Devoutly Peter offers this address.
Thou, brightest splendor of the blue serene,
Can human breasts such baseness entertain ?
But, Where's the man, who dares the crime essay ?
For tho' old age has clad my head with grey,
With manly vigour still my blood is warm,
With lusty sinews still is brac'd my arm,
To take the vengeance to the treason due,
He said : And from the sheath his weapon drew.
Tho' with sure signs, the traitor was reveal'd,
The hero still their minds with deep night seal'd,
Nor would divulge him till his acts betray ;
But thus repli'd to Peter's suppliant plea :
This night supreme, I shall alone remain,
Relinquish'd, shun'd by all my faithless train.
Yea thou, who now in pomp of language rise,
Thy verbose courage swelling to the skies ;
Beneath this roof provoking storms to blow,
And safely rushing on the distant foe :
When thou shalt see me 'mid the hostile train,
Inglorious shackl'd with the servile chain ;
Then thou shalt lurk beneath a lying tongue,
And with a trembling fright the danger shun :
And when bedrop'd with dew, the sable night,
Shall o'er the world obtain her middle height,

Thrice

Thrice me, thy Lord, thou shalt deny, afraid
To stand the questions of an harmlets maid.
T'ouch'd with the speech, more zealous Peter glows,
And boasts a courage fearless of the foes.
Me to proclaim, said he, a coward spare,
'Till from thy foe, I bafe recede, thro' fear:
Let others place their safety in their flight,
I shall be always present to thy sight;
Thy smiling fortune or disasters share,
Nor force compel me to forsake thy care.
The rites perform'd, Christ rises from the feast
And from the town retires with eager haste:
With darknets shrouded, seeks the lonesome plain,
And climbs the Olive mountain with his train;
There bids them the nocturnal vigil keep,
But their eyes close, beneath the weight of sleep:
They strew their limbs along the rocky way,
Spent with the labours of the busy day.
But lulling rest the mournful hero flies,
Who seeming thoughtless of his natal skies,
To fancy gives his torrowing mind to gloom
With the sad picture of his future doom.
His nature shudders at the ghastly view,
Which, as a Man, he from his mother drew;
For tho' the ills that shake the human heart,
He feels terrefick in his mortal part,
Still his soul stands superior to the woes,
And with unconquer'd zeal his virtue glows:
And now before his Sire he prostrate falls,
And on him oft, with hands erect, thus calls.
Must I, O Father, undergo this fate,
And others faults severely expiate?
Snatch me from death: Soften thy hard decree,
And shift this store of sorrow far from me!

L

Yet

Yet if thy mind to no new change will yield,
And, to subdue thy wrath, thy Son must bleed;
I stand a victim for the publick good,
That Man may draw lustration from my blood.
He said: To more complaints suppress'd the way,
And to reflection gave his heart a prey:
And lo! His frame his purpled with his gore,
The bloody sweat fresh bubbling from each pore.
Struck with the sight, a feather'd angel flies,
Charg'd with a store of comforts, from the skies,
To sooth his cares, his spirits to renew,
And from his body wipe the bloody dew.
Mean time the chief of traytors, Judas, goes,
And from the mountain calls the lurking foes,
Who ready at their leader's signal rise,
To seize at once, and lead in chains, their prize.
Their arms shed wide the panting lunar beam,
Shrill sound their shields and harsh their weapons scream;
They cleave the wood, and taper to a point,
And with an unctuous juice the sticks anoint:
They move in long procession with the light,
The greasy flames wide streaming on the night.
The din of weapons and the ruffian cries,
Shake the firm mountain, and bid echo rise.
The Lord advancing pour'd these accents bold,
Stop here your march: Me, whom you seek, behold.
But why these arms, these burning torches, why?
In the full town, amid your peers, have I,
Announc'd my supreme Father's great decree;
And none, tho' armless, presumed to harm me.
Why now do weapons glitter on the night?
But if my orient glory burns so bright,
That only death your envy can appease,
Let flow my blameless blood, and envy cease:

But

But sure my friends may go, from vengeance free,
They only act, what I alone decree.

He spoke: And twice himself their prey confess'd;
And falling twice, Strange sight! The ground they
press'd:

Dash'd to the ground, the massy armour rung,
And a dense darkness on their eye-lids hung:
They rise: But stare quite lost in their design,
As one who lay dissolv'd in sleep and wine.
But Judas soon, who spurn'd the balm of rest,
By signals chaf'd oblivion from their breast:
For veiling treason under friendship's smile,
He fawn'd and kiss'd his Lord with graceful guile.
Tho' in the deed he knew himself betray'd,
Yet the Lord whisp'ring to the traitor said;
Are kisses then the fruit of all my love,
And can rewards to such a crime thee move?
For other ends than golden trash to gain,
I have receiv'd thee vot'rist of my train.
Scarce had he spoke; when on him rush'd the band,
And rolling in dense orbs around him stand.
The fierce youths then the captive hero seize,
And burnish'd arms around him, armless, blaze.
Some bind his hands, some wreath his neck with cord,
Some lead him this, and some another road.
Malchus a rage superior yet can boast,
(Malchus, a bond-man from Idumea's coast)
Who help'd no friend, no foe in war withstood;
In limbs no strength, no valour in his blood:
That Caiphas, (for Malchus was his slave)
Might range him in the number of the brave,
Assur'd no danger could from insult flow,
He basely treats the self-devoted foe.

And tho' he bellows out with tongue severe,
Still safety scarce secures his heart from fear.
Fir'd with the outrage, Peter could not bear;
But with his sword cut off the coward's ear.
The God, regarding the inglorious wound,
Rais'd the disiect'd member from the ground;
Appli'd with healing finger to its place,
And of the wound effac'd the noest trace:
With gentle touch he looth'd away the pain,
And purg'd the ear from dust and sanguine stain.
Then reprimanding Pete., who had glow'd,
To crop the growth of violence with his sword,
Commands him straight his hostile arms to hide,
And not in steel, which Heav'n forbids, confide.
Had not his ardor timely been suppress'd,
He'd soon have lodg'd it in the boaster's breast.
On other weapons, the Redeemer said,
On other valour we rely for aid:
My Sire supreme, (if he had deign'd to save,
Or snatch me from the disappointed grave;
Or pardon Man, by his own mercy won,
Without the blood atonement of his Son.)
Cou'd bid a thousand guards around me flie,
And by their arms this band before me die.
(Say, know you not the militia and pow'rs,
The battles fought, and fame of Heav'n's bright tow'rs?
Now urge my Sire's commands which heave these fighs;
For mortal force and weapons I despise.)
And now the Lord, self-conquer'd and resign'd,
O fight indignant! All insult unkind!
Tho' weak of frame, they chide him of delay;
And often falling, urge him on the way.
Arriv'd they enter at the High Priest's gates,
Where Peers and Citizens assume their seats.

All

All with stern looks the captive Hero eye,
And their fierce threats inform him he shall die.
Then Caiphas, superior to the rest,
The full assembly with his thoughts address'd,
Patriots! At length success has crown'd our cares,
A chain infrangible now the pris'ner wears.
But o'er in mind, what still remains, let's run,
Wisdom ought crown, what glowing zeal begun.
The day draws near, when glory's liquid rays,
Shall on us shed a purple flood of blaze.
Awful attend, and solemnly prepare,
My sentiments religiously to hear.
You know our laws forbid, severely great,
To breath on man the dreadful words of fate;
To Rome alone is giv'n that awful breath,
Which either pardons or pronounces death:
'Tis ours to trace a crime, that's big with fate,
And on the Roman with the process wait:
'Tis his to hear, and nerve the dreadful blow,
That numbers with the dead the friendless foe.
He spoke, and turning to the captive says,
I charge thee by the God whom Heav'n obeys,
To drop deceitful fiction from thy heart,
And cloudless as the Sun, thy thoughts impart:
Lest led by error, darksome we decline,
Thy God-head to confess by rites divine.
Attend, and simply answer, art thou He,
The omnipotent God's true progeny;
A God thy self, whom ancient bards foretold,
Should, gliding soft from Heav'n, the world behold?
He finish'd: The captive armless and weak,
With eyes half-lifted, thus began to speak:
He whom thou say'st, am I; drop then the veil,
Which would the malice of thy words conceal.

I own

I own my God-head; and without delay,
Heav'n to my reign shall ope a lucid way.
Soon, in the starry dome, my Sire supreme,
Shall twine around me with a Father's flame.
Me, visiting the earth, you shall behold,
Cloth'd with the drap'ry of a blazing cloud;
Celestials without number in my train,
Brushing with golden wings th' etherial plain.
He said: When by the rites the High Priest tore,
The robe which flowing down his back he wore.
Glow's not the proof with light, he thus exclaims,
Behold, his crime before us he proclaims?
Do not our laws condemn to bitter death,
The man who dares assert from God his birth?
Haste, drag him to the Roman Consul's gate;
Instant obey: And give him up to fate.
Peter, mean time, struck with the pensive case,
At distance sighing, eyes his Lord's disgrace.
Approaching now the temple's sacred wall,
Where rose in pride the Flamen's spacious hall:
Lonesome he sat, beside an open door,
With sorrow heavy, and in spirit poor.
A female slave, the Pontiff's portress, eyes,
Th' unhappy man, and instantly thus cries;
Say, shar'st thou not the Captive's crimes and flight?
Why roam'st thou else, when all repose, by night?
Peter unman'd chills with a ghastly fear,
At the slave's speech, (To life such love we bear!)
He stands confus'd, in storms of horror tost,
How for to act, or how to fly, quite lost,
Being confus'd, and impotent with fear,
With abject mind, abjur'd a friend so dear,
For whom, while reason o'er him held her lore,
He would have ardent spilt his vital gore.

He

He seeks concealment in the hostile place,
And madly mixes with the servile race;
But soon suspected of the captive's train,
The more they urge, the more he strives to feign.
Thrice they upbraid him with his master's name;
And thrice his master's country was the theme:
His mind thrice startling at the rising lye;
But thrice his words, at length his friend deny.
The lays prophetick which the hero sung,
Gush'd on his spirits and intensely stung.
Corrosive grief pervading fast his frame,
And fell remorse ringing his coward shame.
He steals unseen and thro' the city strays,
Pallid with vigils and the Moon's cold rays.
With sighs he views the baseness of the sin,
Tearing the silver honours of his chin.
'Tis sung by fame, that at each night's return,
He ut'd thro' life the perjur'd hour to mourn.
Of sorrow fond, and to preclude relief,
He tells the strains of his deserted chief:
And fancy always paints his dastard shame,
When a maid's tongue congeal'd with fear his frame.
As yet Aurora, with returning day,
Streak'd not with blaze Olympus' concave way;
When Christ was led, his hands with fetters bound,
To Pilate's palace 'mid a ruffian sound.
Who, when thron'd high on his judicial seat,
The maze of crimes pursu'd and issu'd fate.
Pilate, whose veins stream'd rich with Roman gore,
Judea sway'd beneath Tiberius' lore:
Whom thus the band address'd with furious breath,
Behold a culprit, give him instant death;
Potent in fraud; suspend him high in air,
And the shame let him of the gibbet share.

The

The waves of people overflow the gate,
And the hoarse walls their sanguine cries repeat.
Pontius the captive youth with ardor ey'd
(For scarce youth's blossom in his form had dy'd,)
Insatiate view'd his frame of graceful size,
Th' unwonted beauties of his face and eyes.
Then stood confirm'd, he had deriv'd his birth,
Either from Gods above, or Kings on earth.
And now his breast with soft indulgence flows,
And melts with pity at the captive's woes;
Silent he studies to avert his pains,
And break asunder his inglorious chains:
And thus accosts him: Say, unhappy tell,
With what black crimes thy sad disasters swell?
Whence sudden rise these storms that round thee blow;
What ills thus plunge thee in a sea of woe?
Whence is thy birth, what blood contains thy vein,
What sceptre waits thy hand, or realm thy reign?
To his demand, Christ shortly thus repli'd;
No crime to this tribunal was my guide:
Nor in dread shape arises to my thought,
The least commission of a venial fault:
Unless it is a fault, that I obey,
My Sire, who o'er Olympus bears his sway.
Nor am I anxious for a mortal throne:
Tho' of a regal race my self I own.
He ceas'd: Pilate again begins to trace,
The wond'rous beauties of his noble face:
His wretched case with various speech to try;
But, meri'd in woe, the Lord deign'd no reply.
Pontius, at length, the rabble's rage to fall,
Confines him prisoner, in his inmost hall.

End of the fourth Book.

ARGUMENT of BOOK V.

Pilate, to silence their clamours, desires the Jews to retire and choose a speaker who may inform him of the crimes laid to the prisoner's charge. While the Jews are deliberating, Judas, stung with remorse for his sin, enters the council chamber, declares the prisoner's innocence and his own villainy, throws down before them the silver money, the reward of his treachery; departs frantic with despair, and kills himself. On the Jews' return, Pilate reascends his judgment seat, and harangues in favour of Christ. Pilate hereupon sends the prisoner to Herod, who sends him back to Pilate. Christ is whip'd to appease the multitude, but to no purpose. The wife of Pontius Pilate is frighted by a dream and desires her husband not to shed the blood of that innocent man. Meanwhile Satan, to undo Pilate's resolution of saving the Lord, sends the demon Fear accompanied with Sloth, whose influence prevails on Pilate to give up Christ to the fury of his enemies. These, after many insults, lead him to be crucified. The Virgin Mary, hearing of her Son's disasters, repairs to Calvary, where she sees her Son crucified between two thieves. Her lamentation. At length Christ, exhausted with torments, expires in pain and agony, while all nature sympathises with his fate.

T H E
C H R I S T I A D.

B O O K V.

PLUM'D Fame now thro' the vicine towns had
 stray'd,
 And sung the hero, by his train betray'd.
 The Roman chief revolves, with studious care,
 The blameless captive by some means to spare:
 His virtue, beauty, and his fame combine,
 The tale to strengthen, and his birth divine:
 Then cries: (while tumults thro' the court spread wide)
 Hebrews, depart, and bid your rage subside;
 Among your tribes, let one in order shew,
 The pris'ner's crime that merits mortal woe.
 Indignant they retire, with sullen tread,
 In mind resolv'd to torment Christ till dead.
 Judas, who to the foe his King betray'd,
 Now owns his perjur'd crime, by fear dismay'd,
 How ready wou'd the wretch the deed undo,
 Which vengeful furies and remorse pursue?
 His mind no rest, his breast no comfort takes;
 Fair hope now sleeps, and mad despair now wakes.

The

The sum, that caus'd his pains, with rage he views,
Treason's reward, once granted by the Jews ;
Brings to the Priest's dire hall, then loudly cries,
Behold the wicked bribe, take back the prize.
O wretch undone, I see, I basely fold,
God's progeny, a God himself, for gold.
The shades that o'er my mind induc'd a night,
Fade now, wide scatter'd, and let in the light.
He said ; and casts the coin before them wide,
But they his sorrow and his tears deride.
Hence the unhappy, blind with fury, goes,
And more he thinks, the more augment his woes.
His heart corrodes to pining grief a prey ;
Nor he the ether's convex dares survey.
Then throwing round his baleful eyes, he cri'd
How shall unhappy I, alas ! decide ?
Shall ages, hid in the deep womb of time,
Forget to tell the horror of my crime ?
Shall I go suppliant, and my fault declare ?
But's not in mercy such a crime to spare.
Yet how address, if to behold afraid,
Whom innocent and harmless I betray'd ?
Then shall I go, as far as will can fly,
And live unknown, beneath another sky.
What Place is safe ? The God-head's ev'ry where,
And with his thunders shakes this terrene sphere.
Still shall my guilty mind and cares attend,
Whether I traverse earth or ships ascend.
Yet when and where ?---But I in vain delay,
And on my mind let airy visions play.
Thus he exclaim'd ; resolv'd to find relief,
By drowning in his blood his mighty grief ;
Rashly supposing by some desp'rate means,
His toil to finish, and corrosive pains.

And now he thinks the earth for him transpires,
Or himself wrapt with Heav'n's consuming Fires,
So strongly fancy lids the pris'ner rise,
In vivid paint to his bewilder'd eyes,
His eyes with blood suffus'd, his face with gloom,
And trembling limbs announce impending doom.
Now darkness round him casts her ebon shades,
And to his visual orbs all nature fades.
Mad wretch, who dares not his transgression own,
And call down pardon from the heav'nly throne;
But thinks no vows can move the Supreme Sire,
Nor weeping penance quench his kindled ire;
But obstinately bad, and fix'd on fate,
He goes, and seeks a forest's deep retreat:
There trembling meditates, in horrid strife,
And by destructive means then ends his life.
The new-born day scarce blush'd in ether's space,
When near the palace rush the priestly race;
The porches swell, distended with the crowd.
And with vociferous tumults echo loud.
Nor is it lawful, (so by custom led,)
On sacred days the profane court to tread.
At length the Roman comes, with youths embrac'd,
With flowing robes of purple proudly grac'd:
Mounts at the gate his iv'ry throne sublime,
While nod the fasces of his native clime:
Each father then his seat in order takes,
Silence ensues; and thus the Roman speaks:
Declare at length, the monstrous crime relate,
That shou'd condemn the lovely youth to fate.
After strict search into his life and birth,
We cou'd discover nought that merits death;
But rather found his wond'rous deeds the theme,
That burnish'd bright the plumes of joyful fame.

The

The pris'ner since I saw, and heard his phrase,
The sight, how melting! How divine the lays!
His visage, eyes, and language, all combine,
To own him God, at least of race divine.
To him, therefore, your tribute-homage bring,
Nor, ignorantly proud, disown your king.
He said: Their lurking grief the Hebrews own,
By raging murmurs, and a gen'ral groan.
Then, fam'd for years and sweet perswasive tongue,
In the midst rose Annas, and he thus begun:
Roman, If ev'ry other proof should fail,
The pris'ner's guilty conduct to reveal;
This great assemblage of the city, led,
To see his person reckon'd with the dead,
At least might move thee, leader to proceed,
If no one else, to have the crim'nal bleed.
For this seducer, with an artful tongue,
Tip'd with fine words, has multitudes undone:
And wears, deceitful, virtue's honest face,
While in his heart vice holds the fondest place.
Seest not, what can his new religion mean,
His origes, nightly councils, that convene?
Thro' Juda's towns he lights sedition's flame,
And dares the empire of this great world claim:
Boasts God his Sire, who rules the starry vault,
And like the God absolves, who owns his fault;
Withdraws the fear of vengeance after fate;
Which crime, the laws ordain with death to treat.
But from our ancient customs he refrains,
While his false fram'd God-head new laws ordains;
New rites and off'rings dares in towns proclaim,
And latest ages shall observe the same:
And loudly threats, Oh direful guilt! to spurn,
Our sacred altars, and our temple burn.

A tem-

A temple by our fathers rear'd in air,
A costly structure of laborious care;
Will shortly quench the Sun with ebon dyes,
And charm the stars from the enchanted skies.
Nor long his breast his vices latent bears;
For to nefarious roofs he oft repairs,
Tho' interdicted, there assumes a seat,
While his vile band indulge the genial feast.
Is there thro' all the town a wretch profane,
The greatest ruffian, of a ruffian-train:
With restless joy, to him he swiftly tends,
Nor cease his visits 'til they commence friends?
The love of vice to him appears so fair;
And of his heart deceit holds such a share.
On festive days also, when labour's cease,
The sick he visits and expels disease.
How his disciples roam, shall I relate,
And live, unpunish'd, on illicit meat:
By law unwarranted, with fingers foul,
The stain'd bread handle, and inhale the bowl?
Shall for his sake the Sire supreme withdraw
His holy rites and long-existing law?
Or in his mind can new resolves arise,
And fickle change reign in the constant skies?
Give him to death, lest with his menac'd blow,
Our incens'd altars he shou'd overthrow.
Give him to death, that none in future times,
Shall dare essay to perpetrate such crimes.
Let him in pain, due to his vice, expire;
And thus preserve our shrines from profane fire.
He said: The throng roar out the same demands:
But with their cries unmov'd the Roman stands.
Nor is the charge against the pris'ner new,
A work by hate compil'd, the leader knew.

For

For Christ's bright actions rous'd the Hebrews' ire,
And set their sacrilegious souls on fire.
Your charg'd him in these crimes, the Roman cry'd,
And he, with reason strong, the charge deny'd:
Nor fears Jehovah's Son himself to own,
Who shou'd by promise leave Heaven's bright throne;
To help weak mortals, his Sire's wrath appease,
And reconcile him to the Hebrew race;
With his own pow'r to pay the parents fault
So records tell, and so your fathers taught.
For he, to prove the truth, thro' towns proceeds,
And the whole coasts gaze at his wond'rous deeds;
Which lie beyond the reach of human art,
Nor mortal genius can the skill impart.
Many he call'd to drink the solar beam,
When death, pervading quite the human frame
Dissolv'd the springs that granted life to roll,
And loos'd the body's commerce with the soul.
Ye wretched mortals, then, your hate suppress,
Cease your vain contests, and your God confess.
When this he said, more fierce their fury glows,
More loud they urge their suit, and tear their cloaths.
Herod the King, and of a regal line,
Was then in town to share the rites divine:
For part of his paternal realm he sway'd,
And by Rome's bounty Galilee obey'd.
Of whose arrival when the Roman heard,
From his ingrateful office to be freed;
The Galilean bound he sends, and prays
The Galilean chief with care to trace,
The captive's crime, and with maturest thought,
To deal a vengeance equal to the fault.
Christ's name announc'd, joys in the monarch wake,
To see the pris'ner and to hear him speak.

Soon

Soon to the royal fight he stood confess'd,
Whom soon the King with various themes address'd;
But to no theme he deign'd the least reply:
Nor from the lofty Heav'ns cast down an eye.
Herod admiring but a mortal born,
Restor'd him to the pretor bands with scorn:
And thus dismiss'd, tho' blameless, yet disgrac'd.
Returns to Pontius, with his charge displeas'd
The youth return'd in chains when Pontius saw,
Nor from the throne can he himself withdraw:
Toss'd in a sea of cares and doubtful strife,
He tries each means to save the captive's life.
Now wears a suppliant, now a haughty air,
To move their minds and hearts, untaught to spare:
But vain his threats, vain are his gentle lays,
The more he sooths, the more their furies blaze.
At length he cries; the days their lustre shed,
When we, (by your vain fathers' custom led;)
Among the numbers in your gaols confin'd,
May one dismiss, and his sad chains unbind:
Do you consent, that I this pris'ner free?
The blameless ought enjoy their liberty,
In you at large a feroce nature reigns,
While he already felt a store of pains;
I'll free him then, or take him hence and slay,
Against my will, to death a spotless prey.
His speech is broken by the cohort crowd,
Who forge new crimes, and cry for vengeance loud.
About this time the prison's gloomy round,
Echo'd with Barabbas, in fetters bound;
Long time he waited death's eternal night,
No safety dawning, as no hopes for flight;
Than whom none was more base in ev'ry crime,
Detested by his chiefs and native clime.

The

The Roman asks, their anger to appease,
Whether this wretch or Christ he should release?
With fury blind, and monstrous in their choice,
For Barabbas they beg with suppliant voice:
While strenuously they urge Christ's direful fate,
And with their pow'r the rector's care frustrate.
The scourge and rods (To weep who can forbear?)
Christ's sacred frame by Pilate's order tear.
To quench their thirst of blood, by such vile arts,
Betrays, cries he, their unrelenting hearts;
Perhaps the prospect of his mangled mein,
Their glutted minds from gore and death will wean.
Now blood from his disfigur'd body flows,
His limbs are tabid, and his neck with blows.
Flesh from his arms and neck in pieces bounds,
While his bare sides glare with the lash's wounds.
From his red lips spout thick a sanguine stream,
His naked shoulders own the flagrant shame;
His naked breast with black contusion swells,
And from his knees to feet a crimson wells.
In gore thus welt'ring, (drap'ry veil'd his waist,)
He shews his figure bare with wounds disgrac'd.
Heav'n low'rs, the Moon conceals her blunted light
Beneath the earth, and flies the bloody sight.
The stars, that us'd their twinkling orbs to roll,
Struck with amaze, now seem to shoot the pole.
Such various means to fail, too sadly prove,
How hard the task the Hebrews' hearts to move:
For bending vows can't calm their boist'rous ire,
Nor this blood-scene subdue their blood's desire.
But all catch fury from each other's breath,
And low'ring urge the harmless suff'rer's death.
Now the court's vault is wounded with their cries,
And from profoundest hell the furies rise;

N

These

These shapeless phantoms hov'ring o'er the crowd,
New point their rage, and them with darkness shroud.
Mean time the Roman's bride, with dreams half dead,
Forbids her spouse the young man's blood to shed.
The portents of the Gods appear to threat,
The hands polluted with the pris'ner's fate.
The youth's the snowy lamb that rose to view;
She cries, (for all my dreams are colour'd true,)
Whose mangled body barking dogs surround,
And shepherd-throngs with rustic weapons wound.
(His cruel death soon all the pastures wail,
Each noted forest and sequester'd vale.
The Thund'rer now his vengeance set on fire,
Again the murd'ers hurls from high his ire.
The Heav'ns in pangs rush down on ev'ry side,
And hail beats on the woods and country wide.)
Then soon this voice glides on the streams of air,
Crush mortal rage: The God, O Roman, spare.
I think this youth (to you the marks must shine)
Derives his birth from a celestial line.
To doom him then to death, my lord, abstain,
Nor with his sacred blood your hands profane.
(May the mild Gods these Omens from us chase;
Attend the Jews alone and threat their race.)
The vision heard, the Roman fiercer glows,
Resolv'd the Hebrews' fury to oppose.
Now threat'ning acts, and with contracted brows,
Bids them repeat, elsewhere, their cruel vows.
Now seems intent the pris'ner's chains to loose,
And from his store of cares himself subduce.
Now therefore, so soon as the crowd had seen,
His faded cheeks, and his distorted mein;
Without delay, they seize the present hour,
And their address thus with wild clamours pour:

Your

Your captive dares of King affect the name,
The sceptre wield, and regal honours claim.
If such offences are not big with doom,
Soon shall seditious towns revolt from Rome.
All Syria soon shall by his arts withdraw,
A due submission to the Roman law.
If Cesar then, or Rome demand your care,
Forbid the pest to breathe this vital air;
Due to his many crimes, the vengeance shed,
Lest the contagion thro' the land shou'd spread.
While with the stubborn Jews the roofs thus ring,
The Roman trembles at the name of King,
The monster Fear prevailing in his breast,
Conquer'd, at length he yields to their request:
His pow'r too weak their anger to assuage,
Becomes a slave to their vindictive rage.
Says, I no longer your request deny,
Condemn'd for feign'd offences let him die.
With sorrow pregnant, and without delay,
I hope a fatal forfeit you shall pay,
Pains pour on you and on your race's head,
Due to the captive's blood, unjustly shed.
This said: He bids the waiters quickly bring,
A bowl crown'd with the current of the spring;
And while he laves his hands, he pours this strain;
As I thus purify my hands from stain,
So I disclaim this blood, unjustly spilt,
And purge myself free of the bloody guilt;
When he had said, the judgment-throne descends,
And to his inmost palace swiftly tends.
The Hebrews thus: Let God, if pains are due,
Shed them on us, and on our race renew.
While in the porch, before the palace-gate,
Before the crowd this case was in debate:

The leader's band within the spacious court,
With the mute pris'ner barbarously sport.
As cities hail'd him King, he's now disgrac'd,
With the mock purple, and sublimely plac'd.
For the bright diadem, and crinal gold,
His bleeding temples pointed thorns infold :
And for the sceptre, which proud monarchs wield,
They offer to his hands a river-reed.
The gates wide op'd, with glad applause they bring,
And, in the publick view, salute him King.
So in the hall the menial crew resort,
And pleas'd indulge themselves in this base sport.
For with a veil they overcast his sight,
And with their hands and reeds his visage smite.
Some pluck his beard, concreted with his blood ;
Some from their filthy mouths emit a flood,
Of salive moisture in his sacred face ;
While some his beauteous frame with dust disgrace.
All busy on him heap a store of pains,
Nor of the vile dishonour he complains.
A cruel vigil these barbarians keep,
Nor let his weary eye-lids close in sleep.
Oh heavy grief ! How shocking to be seen,
Appears his mangled and inglorious mein !
And now the victor-Jews among the store,
Of direful pangs, the most acute explore.
That death, attended with his tort'ring train,
May on the pris'ner rush with sharper pain,
To spread and nail him on a fatal tree,
And by slow pangs life waste, the crowd agree ;
Of the sharp ax, the wood repeats each stroke,
And soon falls rushing down the stately oak.
A cross is rear'd, of the cleft timber built,
A torture fram'd to punish heavy guilt.

Kings

Kings once this machine us'd, by loit'ring pain,
The condemn'd wretches' dying lives to drain.
The cross shall, like a lamp, hang in the skies,
And tinge the world with its refulgent dyes :
When the last day all creatures shall entomb,
And a broad blaze all nature's works consume.
Earth scarce was cherish'd with the morning's hue,
When the town pours her youth the scene to view.
With tides of rushing crowds the ways o'erflow,
And with wild tumult all things fervent glow.
Now spoil'd of his mock purple robe of state,
They shouting drag the pris'ner to his fate:
Fetter'd amid the crowd, he's trembling led,
Gash'd with nocturnal wounds, and almost dead :
Around him throng a band in dense array,
Whose arms, and shields, and spears flash on the day ;
Whose helmets glow with crimson plumage crown'd,
And brazen trumps in varied clangors sound.
On foot some follow, some on lofty steeds,
Whose barb'rous shouts each neighb'ring hill far speeds.
Still many weep, whom rectitude enflames,
But chiefly tender maids and pious dames ;
To see him climb the rough rock's airy height,
And 'gainst the stones oft wound his naked feet.
While up the mount, he views the pond'rous oak,
Cries to his mourners with a pensive look,
Ye hoary dames, tho' woes unjust I bear,
Yet cease for me t'indulge the pious tear ;
To your impending pains your tears are due,
And to the wrath that shall your race pursue.
Thus having said, and moving to his fate,
He leaves with tott'ring steps the city's gate.
To Calvary our pensive hero came,
Where he saw for tortures the fatal beam :

Around

Around the hill his mournful eye he throws,
If he could find his friends among his foes :
But none could lustrate, but an hostile band,
Whose weapons flash a splendor o'er the land.
For all his friends, whom once he held so dear,
Now fly him in distress, dispers'd thro' fear.
Sorrow so fills his mind, that ev'ry pore
Emits sweat-drops, deep ting'd with sable gore.
He now remembers oft his native skies,
And, Ether viewing, thus breaks forth in sighs :
Why leave me, mighty Father, in my woes ?
Where's fled the love, a Sire his offspring owes ?
The sad address the potent parent hears,
The sad address strikes deep into his ears.
The cause in his deep breast revolves the God,
And finds the scene is acted by his nod :
The horrid pomp of tortures views serene,
And stills himself, inflam'd with his Son's pain.
Without assistance thus the hero stands,
On ev'ry side beset with ruffian bands ;
And now the clam'rous crew, by furies led,
On a large tree his naked body spread.
Stretch'd to each margin of the transverse beam,
His hands by steel transfix'd with crimson stream.
His gushing feet the same sharp weapons bore,
While the cross blushes with the copious gore.
(All call forth their strength: with blows groans the oak,
And the supine hill ecchoes with each stroke.)
Words, o'er his head, in diff'rent tongues, relate,
His country, name, and cause of his dire fate.
Then, one on either hand, two crosses rear,
Two social suff'ers hanging in the air ;
Whom for their crimes the rig'rous laws resign,
To awful equity, and pains condign,

Him

Him in the mid, a loftier cross sublimes,
As if the first in baseness and in crimes.
Mean while, his Mother, led by vagrant fame,
With haste to the great city lately came.
But now she hears her Son endures his fate,
(By treach'ry seiz'd) without the city-gate;
With the dire news, her looks grow sadly pale,
And her stiff lips, to pour their accents, fail.
For tho' she knew this scene receiv'd the nod,
Of her Son's God-head, and his Father God:
Still o'er her mind such floods of sorrow flow,
That down she sinks, a victim to her woe.
The house sounds plaintive with her female train,
Who strive to sooth her sorrow, shed in vain.
And now she roams the town, now here and there,
Seeking the fatal place with toilsome care:
Now stops, now gazes round, now opes her ear,
To view the tumult, or their clamours hear.
The Mother views the mount, which olives crown,
And which projects its shadows o'er the town;
Javelins and shields rush blazing on her eyes,
And copious hosts of foot and horse-men rise:
Thro' pressing multitudes she cuts her way,
And leaves the city walls without delay:
Her flight the matrons from their porches see,
Or lofty windows, and feel her mis'ry:
Now these, now others she outstrips in speed;
Tho' often wounded by the running steed.
John with his mother, virgin Martha, came;
Her sister Salome attends the dame;
Cleopha's weak spouse joins the sad parade,
Their temples shrouded with a sable shade.
Now near the hill, she views the standing tree,
Ladders, and other signs of agony:

And

And tho' their use to her was yet unknown,
Howe'er their sight extends a fearful groan.
Her hands thrice smite her gen'rous breast, and tear
The head's fair ornament, her flowing hair.
Alas! Within her mind, she thus debates,
What mean these tools, what ills this machine threatens?
The raging Jews, I know, an odious foe,
Would on us shed, long since, unworthy woe.
The troops each passage with their shields inclose,
And her swift progress with their force oppose.
On the hill's brow the knotted cross appears,
And the huge rough engine confirms her fears.
But when she sees her Son's tormenting state,
Fix'd to the cross, convulsive with his fate;
His hands and feet pierc'd with the jav'lin's wound;
His temples with a bleeding 'chaplet crown'd;
Bedew'd with death's sad drops, his languid eyes;
His beard and tresses stain'd with sanguine dyes:
Drop'd on one shoulder his dejected head;
And o'er his form death's pallid tincture spread;
The wretched Mother stiffens as the rock,
Which, on the Alps, contemns the tempest's shock.
When from the tree the Son his Mother spy'd,
Her mental torments thro' his bosom glide:
But on her soon he rests his dying sight,
And from this loving glance results delight.
To sooth her mind oppress'd with her distress:
At length he pours this sad and last address.
I suffer'd mute, till now, without relief;
Nor, woman, be a prey to gnawing grief:
Since Heav'n's great Sire permits this groupe of pains,
Who with his nod o'er boundless nature reigns.
Woman, this youth (for John stood weeping near,)
Behold, hereafter, as your Son most dear;

Then

Then soon to John his words he thus applies ;
This woman always view with filial eyes :
Guard her abandon'd state, I dying sue,
And pay the love, to a fond mother due.
With wounded minds the foes lament his pains,
And the fierce host grow soften'd with his strains.
At length the Mother her sad silence breaks,
While a deep groan her throbbing bosom shakes.
Lav'd with her sorrow, she the cross contains
Within her clasping arms, and thus complains :
My Son, of all creation's works the pride,
To thy sad Mother how thy charms subside !
Why can't my love forbid thee undergo,
The cruel agony of mortal woe.
For others crimes the pangs of tortures feel,
And pierce my bosom with the bloody steel ?
An Angel me, with virgin tremors chill'd,
Once with a far more pleasing promise fill'd.
Am I thus happier than the happiest fair ;
And move I thus the queen of ether's sphere ?
Are these the glories playing round my head,
And these the honours on my station shed ?
After my throes, their gifts why Kings bestow'd,
And from celestials why soft anthems flow'd ?
If such a cruel lot remain'd for me,
And spun out life this bloody scene to see.
Thrice happy dames, whose sons the King with rage,
Depriv'd of life in their soft infant age :
The sage foretold my woes in horrid sounds,
My breasts should welter by the poniard's wounds.
The weeping maid thus pour'd the sadd'ning strain,
Nor could her friends remove her from the scene.
The troops their scoffs now on the sufferer spend,
(To a hard foe, a foe in war's a friend.)

O

With

With laughter-noding heads the cross surround,
And the skies concave with these insults wound.
Lo! He our city threaten'd and our fanes,
And said, he shot from ether's chrystal plains :
His lineage drawing from the Sire Supreme,
And falsely dar'd himself a God proclaim.
What homage now is to his God-head paid,
Since God disowns him by refusing aid?
Who many snatch'd descending to the grave,
From his own groupe of woes himself can't save.
Let him now break, to shew his Deity,
His captive-chains, and fly the graceless tree.
Then shall we own, by such a wond'rous sign,
The skies his mansion, and his race divine,
On the sad suff'rer in his dying hour,
Their base derision thus the soldiers show'r :
But, with a mind unconquer'd and serene,
He passive bears their insolent disdain,
Implores with too much clemency his Sire,
To spare their ignorance and darksome ire.
Mean while two youths, pail'd to a transverse beam,
The same their theft, and punishment the same!
Between themselves are heard in warm debate,
Tho' writhing with the pains of instant fate.
One mad with ling'ring woes thus dares deride,
The dying chief, with words elate' with pride :
Destroy our temple built with toilsome care,
And in three days the sacred structure rear.
If, as thou say'st, from ether comes thy line,
And great Jehovah is thy Sire divine :
To free us and thyself is in thy pow'r,
From the sad train of woes that on us low'r.
But torments now thy race divine belie,
Tho' spread thro' towns, compell'd with us to die.

Him

Him on the chief's right hand in torments hung,
In reprimands employs his dying tongue.
What madness rules thy mind, ah wretch! declare,
The vengeance due to our offence we bear:
But he without offence is drag'd to fate,
The harmless victim of outrageous hate.
Ought we not then our horrid deeds confess,
Implore his pardon, and for peace address?
This having said, to God he turns his eyes,
View me, thou God's true offspring, thus he cries,
And, since the lofty stars thy coming wait,
Be gracious present in my dying state.
The God assents, and thus vouchsafes to say;
Thou shalt my praise and glories share to-day:
The realms which me, shall happy thee receive,
Then, from this hour, the skies in mind conceive.
With pain he spoke; the stream of life subsides;
While death from the pang'd soul the frame divides.
A boiling sweat now from Christ's body flows,
And his parch'd mouth with thirsty dryness glows.
At length, he rais'd his eyes with death oppress'd,
And call'd to quaff the stream, his last request.
Ty'd to the margin of an osier-pole,
To his pale thirsty lips they move a bowl,
Crown'd with the juice of vinegar and gall;
Loathsome ingredients! Which the taste appall.
From the touch'd juice his poison'd tongue refrains,
And a long time the bitter sense retains.
Mean while the bands with loud disorder rise,
With ardor striving to divide the prize.
The sufferer's robe is the contested spoil,
Which once his mother wove with pious toil.
But, as the tunick without seam appears,
It can't be dealt among the band in shares:

Wherefore in fortune all their hopes confide,
By lot to carry what they can't divide.
This once the sacred prophets told in lays.
Their throbbing bosoms big with future days,
His middle course now Sol had almost made,
When on a sudden clouds his radiance shade.
And in meridian blaze, (A fearful sight !)
On earth incumbent broods a fable night.
The skies lie wrap'd in clouds of mournful hue,
And ev'ry prospect flies the mortal view.
In the high Heav'ns such signs of grief appear,
(If grief had place in the celestial sphere)
One might believe Jehovah heav'd with sighs,
And turn'd from wicked earth his starry eyes,
The light'nings flash ; sparkle the conscious poles ;
And shaking thunder thro' Olympus rolls.
Such murmurs rattle thro' the blue profound,
That the world's fabrick cracks, and seems unbound.
Earth's centre roars ; his waves vast Ocean spreads,
Reel the high domes, and turrets nod their heads.
A chilling horror thro' the nation streams,
And cities structur'd on the world's extremes,
The cause unknown, tho' strange the scenes appear,
And Heav'n and Earth a night perpetual fear.
But browner horrors on the Hebrews frown,
And a pale panic hovers o'er their town,
A gen'ral groan ascends the heav'nly climes,
Each mind deep wounded with its conscious crimes.
A signal threat bursts from the thund'ring Sire,
And on the temple falls the vengeful ire :
The broad expanded veil, from vulgar view,
Which once the sacred mystic rites withdrew,
Gapes a wide fissure ; while the columns nod,
Cracking beneath the temple of the God,

And

And now the dying ~~Christ's~~ last accents wound,
The pensive air with vehemence of sound.

Lo! All is consummated, Father deign,
Receive this soul without a guilty stain:
Thus having said, he faints, from life retires,
And, bowing down his languid head, expires.

End of the fifth Book.

ARGUMENT of BOOK VI.

Joseph of Arimathea requests Pilate to grant him the body of Christ. This favour obtained, conjointly with Nicodemus, he takes it down from the cross, and lays it in a sepulchre he had newly erected for himself. Here a band of soldiers are made to watch, to hinder the body being stolen by the Disciples. Early the third morn after the Crucifixion, Mary Magdalen and the other Mary come to embalm the body, but, instead of it, find an Angel sitting in the sepulchre, who announces the Resurrection of the Lord, and his going before them into Galilee. This report was regarded by the Apostles and others as the work of female fancy; but they were soon convinced of the contrary, by his many apparitions and the wonders he had wrought among them, whilst he conversed with and instructed them, for forty days together, in their several apostolical duties. This work now draws to a conclusion by Christ's Ascension into Heaven, preceeded by the instruments of his Passion borne by Angels. Next ensues the Descent of the Holy Ghost; the wonderful change wrought in the Disciples by his Descent, and the miracles performed by them from his Inspiration. Lastly, is set forth the departure of the Apostles to divers parts of the world for preaching faith in Jesus Christ, and the blessings attending his reign.

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T H E
C H R I S T I A D.

B O O K VI.

NOW Vesper hastes to mount the gloomy sky,
While the dead bodies unsepulchred lie:
Remain unwept on the mount's hoary height,
The trees sustaining still their mortal weight.
Josephus from Arimathean tow'rs,
On the base treat with indignation low'rs:
His soul refin'd with ev'ry mental grace,
And beauty smiling in his youthful face.
In the contending field of battle bold,
Rich in expanse of land, and copious gold.
He, by the hero's wond'rous actions sway'd,
A glad attendant, his commands obey'd;
While others then, by fear to forests haste,
Or hide in caverns, or range some dreary waste;
Without delay the nation's chief he seeks,
And thus, endow'd with youth and courage, speaks:
Thou best of Romans, whom, with plausible breath,
Fame sings unstained with our hero's death:

Who

Who, by your pow'r, tho' oft withdrawn from fate,
Still fell a victim to our nation's hate.
Stung with his words to their offences due,
Tho' free they seiz'd him, and tho' guiltless flew,
Grant then, at least, the body to inter,
The only comfort thou canst now confer.
I shall repose his relicks in the tomb,
Which late I rear'd, full of my future doom.
Pontius to this replies with soften'd voice,
To grant him living, How would I rejoice!
For I attest that, Gods whom truth delights,
(And Gods in faith are worship'd with our rites)
How often I revolv'd in mind each scheme,
From death to free him, who was free from blame.
But vain I sooth'd the city with my pray'r,
Their rage destroying whom I wish'd to spare.
Go then, his body honour with an urn,
And with due obsequies his fun'ral mourn.
This said; Josephus bends his ardent way,
And seeks the mountain's brow without delay.
By Nicodemus join'd, who climbs the height,
His mind deep wounded with the hero's fate.
And now they both the mountain's brow pursue,
Whence the drear place full rushes to the view;
When lo! Bright weapons flash along the ground,
And cohorts arm'd the mountain's cliff surround.
The town forbids that trees the corpse display,
Or with the carnage blot their festive day.
The male factors by the scribes' commands,
For burial then are loof'd by weapon'd bands;
But the tormented thieves are found alive,
Who, fond of death, their tortures still survive.
Wherefore they brake with iron tools their bones,
And the mount echoes with their piteous groans.

Their

Their deaths thus hast'ned their bodies they depose,
And swiftly in the yawning grave inclose:
But when they saw him dead, who bore our pains,
T'abuse the sightless corps their rage abstains;
They all admire his vitals' sudden fail,
His nerveless limbs, and visage wond'rous pale.
'Tis fam'd the youthful natives of the sky,
Their vestures blushing with a crimson dye,
Were seen with wings to beat the airy space,
And in a clust'ring orb the cross embrace:
Catch the bless'd moisture gushing from the wound,
And bear the chalice to the bright profound.
The base Longinus dares alone to hide,
His profane weapon in his sacred side;
The spear grows tepid, and imbibes the blood,
Which gurgles like a party-colour'd flood:
For water stain'd with gore wells from the wound,
Purp'ling the grass, and drenching deep the ground.
Josephus rushes thro' the guardian train,
Ascends the cross, lets down his master slain:
Far from the din of arms his corpse conveys,
And with the cloth, bought for that use, arrays.
Ye, Heav'n's young throng, your presents hither bring,
Charg'd with the honours of eternal spring:
Narcissus, hyacinths, and vi'lets pour,
And bathe the body with the rosy show'r.)
The hills and woods resound with female cries,
And they lament his death in streaming sighs.
The wretched Mother, with dishevell'd hair,
Pines on a rock, her heart distress'd with care:
Holds in her lap her Son, with blood deep dy'd,
His eye-lids kisses, and his wounded side.
And now not tears nor sighs her grief confess,
Too great for utterance is her deep distress;

Chill'd with her fear, and stupid with her moan,
She grows as silent as the senseless stone.
Smiting their throbbing breasts some dames deplore,
With tepid streams some lave the corpse from gore:
Some with the textur'd off'ring of a shroud,
The squalid members of the corpse infold.
One matron bending drops the pensive tear,
And dries his knees with her disorder'd hair.
While another kisses, with sobbing breath,
His hands and feet, stiff with the cold of death,
The streaming sorrow flows from all their eyes,
And the mount echoes with their dismal cries.
The men, while larger drops their cheeks distain,
Scarce from the corpse remove the female train.
At length the matrons, sooth'd, retire with pain,
And in his tomb the men repose the slain.
The obsequies perform'd, they all recede,
And to her dome th'unhappy Mother lead.
Nor anxious care is from the Hebrews fled,
Their hearts still fear him, tho' among the dead.
For oft they heard him promise, (while his train,
Dreaded the prospect of the hostile pain,)
He should arise the third day from the dead,
And sacred bards the same have loudly said.
Full of this fear, they send without delay,
A band, to guard the bust both night and day:
Lest any should, by night, withdraw the slain,
And with false fame the city entertain;
That the sepulchred treads this terrene sphere,
Inhales the solar beams and vital air.
While in the blue immense some wonders rise,
The third day blushes in the eastern skies:
The Sire supreme his Son with radiance wreaths,
And on his limbs immortal beauty breathes.

His

His frame once mortal, and to wounds a prey,
Is now immortal, glorious as the ray,
Which polar stars shed on the clear serene,
Or golden Sol in his meridian reign.
These wond'rous visions floating in the skies,
Dissolve the pannic nations with surprize:
And now the Sun his orient beams displays,
The night retiring from the gushing blaze.
Now Magdalena, with a weeping train,
Transfix'd with sorrow for her hero slain,
Brings in her lap, when Sol in ether dawns,
The scented herbage of Arabia's lawns,
The balsam, spikenard, and the myrrh's perfume,
The ritual honours, offer'd at the tomb.
As thro' the fields the dames with sorrow go,
Each mutual speaks the dictates of her woe.
Unhappy we, the pensive matrons cry'd,
That have not with our piteous hero dy'd!
But how shall we the watchful guard deceive?
Or the huge stone from the tomb's entrance heave?
To pay, at least, our duty to the dead,
And in the dreary tomb our off'ring spread?
While thus complaining, near the tomb they drew,
Throwing on ev'ry side, a piercing view,
Void of all guards the mountain's orb behold,
And the great stone from the sepulchre roll'd.
But the tomb find empty of the corpse, ^{rose,}
With thoughts, the slain was stol'n by the foes,
From Magdalena drops the balmy store,
Of funeral gifts, she to the body bore.
The hills and groves seem to lament the fair,
With sorrow tearing her dishevell'd hair.
But soon a youth with purple wings they eye,
With drap'ry white, a native of the sky.

To the sad train he pays this soft address :
Whom seek ye dames ; Why pine you with distress ?
Let fear, in future, in your minds subside,
And trickling gladness in your bosoms glide,
Since he, whose cruel torments you deplore,
Staining for you the gibbet with his gore :
Since he, whose sole spontaneous death alone,
Could for the sins of all mankind atone :
(Triumphant o'er the king of hell's retreat,
Revisits, from the shades, this lucid state ;)
Inhales at present this supernal day ;
His refin'd frame, no more to death a prey.
This said : In air his melted figure glides,
But doubt, before the present scene subsides,
Pierc'd with delay her mind, with love her heart :
The maid admires the tomb and builder's art :
For on the tomb a sculptur'd shore is spread,
Where lies a fish, whose jaws a deluge shed :
Such is the tyrant of the sea, a Whale,
Whose bulk's a dread to them who near it sail :
From whose voracious mouth the Prophet roll'd,
To re-inhale this air, and day behold.
This scene (she cries) confirms the angels strain,
Nor ancient types drew future things in vain.
For as the bard lay in the monster's womb,
Three nights and days involv'd with ambient gloom ;
So God by friends and skies deplor'd, when dead,
Amid the darkness of the tomb was spread,
A victor from the empty vault should rise,
And now (as he foretold) asserts his skies.
But soon the God, in rustic vest array'd,
Moves to the tomb, where sits the musing maid,
Pensive she eyes him : But his speech betrays,
The God bedew'd with newly painted rays.

She

She falls, and holds his knees, in close embrace,
Her eyes roll round him, and devour his face.
His placid looks soon sooth her pining love,
And from her breast her plaintive grief remove.
Her colour ripens; but the turgid tear,
Flows from her eyes, and, down her neck, her hair.
As fades her grief, in charms the Maid so grows,
And with her King and God in converse glows.
And while she pants what language to pursue,
Wrapt in a cloud, he vanishes from view.
While thro' the towns of Palestina, Fame
Scatters, without delay, the wond'rous theme:
Congeal'd with fear, the priests attempt each means
To stop her progress, and condemn her strains.
But chief the troops who spread the first report,
Guards of the bust, by golden bribes they court,
To tell, that his disciples stole the slain,
While, o'er the sleeping world, night held its reign.
But vain's the task, to tame truth's mighty force,
For more the priests contends to stop the course,
Of Fame, with higher flights she plumes her wings,
And, on remoter coasts, the wonders sings.
Some boldly own they saw the tombs display,
Their gates, spontaneous, and admit the day:
Pale shades stalk ghastly in the glare of light,
Whose bones Earth shrouded with her central night.
Mean time the hero's friends, a pensive band,
Wither'd with fear, are scatter'd o'er the land;
Fancy the Sun shall ne'er the skies illumine,
And, he extinct, the world shall fade with gloom.
At length beneath the roof, they sad convene,
Which oft the hero honour'd with his train:
To them, their King alive, a sweet retreat;
But slain, appears a solitary seat.

The

The dome no more shall feast the hero guest,
Or with his looks, his social friends be blest'd :
No more his name shall fill the raptur'd ear,
Or his soft eye out blaze the starry sphere.
Such sick'ning thoughts the sad assembly shade,
And nature seems with black despair to fade.
Behold the matrons to the dome repair,
Where the assembly lay in sad despair ;
Amaz'd report they saw an Angel choir ;
The King, himself, new dress'd with beams of fire ;
Besides, the tomb of its dead charge resign'd,
And all the future drap'ry left behind.
Some climb the mountain's crown with breathless haste,
And find the tomb an empty, dreary waste.
These wond'rous visions still to some appear,
The work of fancy, and of female fear.
But lo ! When Vesper rul'd the chrystal plain,
The hero stands before his conven'd train ;
His well known form and voice, the God confess,
Laying aside his blaze, and sunny dress.
Then Didymus was absent from the dome,
Impell'd by fear, (the hero slain) to roam ;
To see his 'sociates to the town repairs,
Who lay in wonder lost, and mute with fears.
With ardor Didymus, the scene unknown,
His 'sociates sues, the wond'rous cause to own :
Peter, while tears bedew his hoary cheeks,
After a close embrace, at length thus speaks :
Heav'n's monarch lives ; whom death snatch'd from
our sight.
He lives, thrice happy we, and quaffs this light,
Thus having said, his joys so tow'ring rise,
That in his mind, he seems to tread the skies.

But

But Didymus still doubts and thus replies:
Say, is't the King himself, who breathes these skies?
Or rather, say, a creature of the brain,
Who to deceive your eyes assumes his mein?
Peter returns: 'Tis he, the very same,
Our eyes have view'd, and hands have felt his frame.
Survey'd the gaping scissure of his wounds,
And air celestial that his form surrounds.
What time bright Vesper sways Olympus' state,
The windows clos'd, and clos'd the massy gate,
Beneath this roof, we lay dissolv'd with fear,
And pensive press'd our seats the feasts to share.
In this clos'd hall our chief invades our sight,
Whose sparkling looks amaze us and delight:
With chilling horror we astonish'd gaze;
While the walls vested with his lustre blaze.
But soon he checks our fear and vain surprise;
And interdicts us from the board to rise.
'Tis I; be peaceful; and your fears subdue,
Here feel my frame, and my five wounds now view;
Nor did he scorn besides, to take a seat,
And, humbly social, share our frugal feast;
The last and noted words deign'd to repeat,
Which from him sadly flow'd, when near his fate.
Then willing, from our sight, to disappear,
His body softly fades to liquid air.
Scarce had the sage pronounc'd the wond'rous scene,
Approv'd and clamour'd by the present train.
When enters Cleophas with gladsome mind,
(Whom to his apostles the chief once join'd.)
He lives; Dismiss your fears, my friends, he cries;
Our monarch lives; to death no more a prize.
These very eyes devour'd his beauteous face,
These very ears inhal'd his well-known phrase:.

My

My fellow trav'ler drunk the vocal tide;
Pointing to Amon, who then press'd his side.
For as we travell'd, with our sorrows pale,
Where Emau's hills subside into a vale;
With us the way an unknown trav'ler press'd;
His person strange, and in strange garments dress'd.
While he deceiv'd, with varied speech, the road,
Tears from our eyes, sighs from our bosoms flow'd:
With soothing words he sought to give relief,
And oft enquir'd the subject of our grief.
Our hero's cruel fate, to him, we sigh'd,
In whose sad death, our comfort also di'd.
How all his words and deeds our hope inspir'd;
And with his life our flatter'd hope retir'd.
Unable longer our complaints to hear,
He thus replies, with reprimands severe:
O shameless race, offus'd with mental gloom!
Have not your bards foretold your leader's doom?
His bloody fall your ancient records taught!
Which you discredit, tho' with justice fraught:
That he should sole, to calm his Father's ire,
For all mankind, spontaneously expire,
His gushing wounds should streak with crimson dyes,
His rapid progress to his native skies.
As he evolv'd the rites, how darkness fled,
What light on the prophetick leaves was spread!
What thrilling sweetness thro' our senses flow'd:
And in our breasts, what loving ardor glow'd!
So blind we were, he still remain'd unknown,
'Till we arriv'd to Emau's little town,
Where feigning to proceed a longer way,
We humbly su'd beneath the roof to stay.
To cease his journey, Vesper might persuade,
Expanding over earth a sable shade.

He

He soon obeys; deigning to take a seat,
And with us share our poor and frugal feast.
No sooner had he touch'd the wheaten bread,
And broke, as by his ancient custom led;
Soon night departs, our eyes inhale the day;
We own the God, and adoration pay.
But into air, like fume, he sudden fades,
And grown too fine for sense our sight evades.
The truth of Cleophas not one resists,
But Didymus; whose error still exists:
None shall persuade me that he lives, (he cries,)
Unless he stands conspicuous to my eyes?
Unless I feel the wounds his body bore,
Once welling out in rills his vital gore.
This said: The windows bar'd and door remain,
Christ stands, with rays bedew'd, amid his train.
All prostrate press the earth without delay,
And on adoring knees their homage pay.
When Didymus beheld the display'd wounds,
And heard himself address'd by vocal sounds,
Instant he humbles prone, with horror shakes,
And angry with himself at length thus speaks:
Convinc'd I own the features of thy face,
And the true tokens of thy God-head trace,
I little thought, (I own) that after death,
Thou couldst inhale this light and earthly breath.
Madly forgetful of thy supreme lays,
Thou should'st thy body on the third light raise.
Nor strange: When as thou bad'st man's frame repair,
Tho' four days buried, to this vital air.
When present at this deed, could I refrain,
My faith, unless distemper'd was my brain?
Perhaps my error flows from thy decree,
That others may believe, who shall not see;

Q

May

May not demand to feel thy mortal mein,
Lest spectres, to deceive, thy frame should feign.
While thus he pray'd, the blazing God retires,
And with pure zeal each of his train inspires;
Nor from the earth he trod Olympus' way,
'Till, in the east, emerg'd the four-tenth day.
Now Peter and his friends had plough'd the main,
And fish'd to gain their bread, all night in vain.
Drench'd with the billows and fatigu'd with toil,
Collect their fruitless nets uncrown'd with spoil;
When lo! A youth of beauteous form they ey'd,
Beholding from the shore the briny tide.
Nor stood the God-head to their sight reveal'd,
His sacred frame with mortal limbs conceal'd.
At length he thus address'd the fisher band,
Desist not men, but turn the stern to land;
'Tis granted, sailing to the pebbled shore,
To crown your labours with a scaly store.
Their course revers'd, they instantly obey;
And with their out-cast nets ferments the sea.
A sign of his vast prey soon Peter made,
And call'd his friends, by gesture to his aid.
The loaded net all scarce with labour heave,
While leap the fishes panting for the wave:
John soon the God discovers, and thus cries,
Our chief is here, I know him in disguise.
See how his body glows with heav'nly grace!
What smiles gush radiant from his beauteous face!
No sooner Peter had his hero ey'd,
But from his ship he plunges in the tide,
Ardent to hail his chief, the first on shore,
'Tho' trembling at the surge's stormy roar.
The rest, with fervent oars pursue the sands,
In hast'ning vessels, where the hero stands.

And

And now the fishers, at the chief's desire,
Prepare the repast which their toils require.
With wheaten cakes some load the board in haste:
Some broil the fish upon the sandy waste.
While some inspire the kindling flames to rise,
Whose gloomy light meanders to the skies.
Hunger expell'd, the King without delay,
Thus cries, his God-head blazing on the day:
Mortals with ardent vows pursue fair peace,
And court fair peace with softest songs of praise.
And now, my friends, here we must for e'er part,
Farewell for ever; Let me share the heart:
For high Olympus, thro' its splendid seats,
Displays its portals and my presence waits.
To be above the reach of frowning care,
For suff'ring ev'ry ill your minds prepare:
Fear not to go before majestic pow'r,
But strictest truth in tyrants ears dare show'r:
Too rich to covet what this light displays,
Look down on thrones, nor dread the sceptre's rays;
Nor be too anxious to remark what hour,
Or the best method your advice to pour.
I shall be present with you in my aid,
Shedding a tide of words, with grace array'd.
The Heav'ns themselves shall in your cause conspire,
To nerve your strength, and comfort to inspire:
When the tenth day shall vest with blaze the poles,
My Sire shall waft the spirit in your souls.
Beneath whose guardian you shall proclaim,
Boldly, before the lords of earth, my name,
A holy progeny shall shortly rise,
Brightly diffusive to the golden skies.
And on this world when the last day shall shine,
And yawning tombs their human bones resign:

Q²

When

When all the dead, who in earth's bosom lay,
Shall rise again, emerging to the day :
When sages, matrons, and an infant band,
Shall throng these mountains and the subject land,
When I shall sit in judgment in the vale,
And death or life to all mankind shall deal.
Ye twelve shall each assume his lofty seat,
Shedding with me, on man, his life or fate.
Isr'els twelve tribes from you their lot shall hear,
And nature wonder, at the state you share.
Peter, mean time, (in zeal to no one yield,)
The world's great key and sceptre thou shalt wield :
Preside o'er all, who willing fill my train,
Such honours I confer, thou shalt maintain.
To you all is giv'n the world's imper'al lore,
Your reign be legal, and humane your pow'r.
The smiles of peace on the religious shed,
And your just anger let rebellion dread.
Shall any wretch, with dire offences base,
And deaf to reprimands your vengeance raise ?
From human commerce chaf'd and sacred fanes,
Shall also be expell'd the heav'nly plains.
He'll hope in vain to tread the starry climes,
'Till, purg'd by penance, you absolve his crimes.
To you such sway is giv'n o'er human clay,
To shut the gates of ether or display.
Such mandates he pronounc'd before his flight,
From this expanded earth, and human sight.
This having said : Resplendent lights surround,
The mountain's airy brows, with palms imbrown'd :
The lengthen'd shores, sequest'ring in a maze,
Are richly gilded with refulgent rays.
Jehovah's offspring thus ascends sublime,
The clouds dispersing to the starry clime.

But

But left mankind's offences should inflame,
And rouse to vengeful ire, the Sire supreme;
To stop the fury of the direful blow,
He brings the ensigns of his deadly woe.
But hark! A noise from op'ning clouds descends,
And in their ears these liquid accents spends:
Why gaze ye, trembling, on this starry plain?
Here, with his Sire, the God resumes his reign.
Without delay, Olympus' dome resounds,
With vocal strains, and instrumental sounds:
Their joys, alternate, the apostles sing,
To Heaven their eyes, and spirits on the wing.
Rejoice ye nations, and with hymns attend,
Behold the God the tow'ring skies ascend.
Let nature, in her works, her author own,
And, with a gen'ral song, address his throne.
Before time born, Jehovah's great increase
Shall always reign, whose God-head fills all space;
Who call'd to being all things from no-where,
The foaming ocean, earth, and ether's sphere:
From nothing gave to all with life to rise,
That move beneath the convex of the skies;
Divided Heaven from earth, the earth from seas,
Vesting Olympus' domes with sheets of blaze;
Pencil'd the earth with herbs of various hue,
Swell'd fields with corn, and vines with rosy dew.
Hail nature's Lord! This world's great Saviour hail!
With smiles behold us, and with mercy deal;
Thy death displays Olympus' portals wide,
And sooths thy Father's anger to subside.
Thus hymn'd th' eleven sages on the strand,
Beneath a rock, join'd by a youthful band.
Yet 'mid such joy, with panick fear they chill'd,
Nor with the Spirit-God their hearts were fill'd;

The

The desarts dreary wilds they often fought,
And, trembling, plung'd into some shaggy grot.
Now dawns the promis'd day, for darkness flies,
The tenth day's lustre beaming in the skies;
The Sire supreme, in the celestial space,
The stars now kindles with a purer blaze:
'Mid his celestials, where he sits sublime,
His compacts filling, and dispensing time.
To whom his Son stands splendidly confest,
(His mortal limbs in liquid glory dress'd,)
And pours his vows, before the sacred shrine;
In accents softly breathing love divine.
My colleagues, Father, now require thy aid,
Who, since their leader's death, with horror fade:
In terror lost, they rove from place to place,
Such is the weakness of the mortal race.
Their fear expel, strength to their breasts bestow,
To front all dangers, and subdue the foe.
Now Solyma and Judah's realm conspire,
With guile to seize, or 'gainst them dart their ire,
Thou promis'd'st Sire, (nor is thy promise vain)
Equal to ev'ry noble act, my train,
Shall, far as Ocean girts this world, proclaim,
Thro' ev'ry land, my never-fading name.
Instruct the nations to respect my law,
And by new mystick rites to homage draw.
And, since thou grant'st them in the skies a place,
I oft, relying on thy tender grace,
Their fainting spirits rais'd; wak'd with the thought,
That aid wou'd soon descend the starry vault.
Thus help'd they scorn a tyrants cruel sway,
And all his wicked mandates disobey;
With joy the pangs of death spontaneous prove,
And victims fall to true religion's love.

This

This said by the Son, to the mighty Sire,
He, full of love, assents to his desire:
Thy vows are heard; cease Son thy hands to tend,
To thy colleagues, the sacred Ghost we'll send,
And others whom thou wilt, we shall inspire,
And in their breasts illume our holy fire.
Wasteful of life, they shall not dread the steel,
Nor flames, nor beasts, nor the sharp-dented wheel.
Who tremble now, at Zephir's softest sigh,
Shall, for thy love, to certain dangers fly.
Fancy, mean while, presenting to the view,
The traitor Judas' crime of odious hue,
The colleagues for the mission now prepare,
And 'mong themselves divide the terrene sphere,
Where each shall in his bounds new ethics deal,
And to the nations novel rites reveal;
One for the sacred senate to provide,
That twelve might still o'er all the rest preside;
And now by lot, from the disciple-train,
To fill the vacant see, they one obtain;
The lot, Matthias, in a happy hour,
Descends, He's vested with the holy pow'r;
In merit wealthy, and in fortune poor,
In title splendent, and in birth obscure.
While the same grief on ev'ry visage low'rs,
The same address the whole assembly pours:|
Wou'd the Almighty Ghost from ether's sphere,
By inspiration to our hearts repair;
For oft the Lord to his associates said,
The Spirit-God would come to give us aid.
Truth always crown'd our chief's prophetick strains,
This promise only incomplete remains.
Then God the Sire, and his coeval Heir,
The Spirit jointly waft from ether's sphere.

Now

Now lo! The Spirit-God Olympus leaves,
And in the men infus'd the God-head heaves.
Cold fear retires, while sacred fury rolls,
Thro' the deep mazes of the raptur'd souls:
Impatient of delay, they feel no rest,
Their bosoms throbbing with the Spirit-guest.
Now, free from terror, the disciple throng,
Declare God's wond'rous deeds in wond'rous song,
While the same words (who can believe the lay,)
To stranger crowds the clearest truths convey:
For of the num'rous host each foreign'r hears,
His native language, sounding in his ears.
From diff'rent climes, now various tribes repair,
To view the town, or sacred rites to share;
These rites begin, when fifty days are past,
After the Paschal Lamb's religious feast.
Who, 'mid the myriads, sprung from Lybian ground,
Hear th' apostles their proper idiom sound.
Admiring Gauls and Romans catch their notes,
While to the Parthian ears their language floats.
Their natal accents list'ning Scythians hear,
And Thracians, numb'd beneath their icy sphere.
Crete, Africa, Phrygia, hearken with surprize,
And those who breathe Arabia's happy skies.
The tribes stand aw'd, who till fair India's lands,
And Garamantes, who roam thro' wilds of sands.
Each band admire to hear their country phrase:
And on themselves with admiration gaze.
And now dispers'd thro' various climes each strays,
The leader's deeds their song, his name their praise:
So that (as ancient bards foretold,) their strains,
Sounded on earthly globe's remotest plains.
The strains were heard: And towns with awe attend,
Their sacred rites, and to their mandates bend.

- The

The stain of ancient sin all nations leave;
And spotless rise from the baptismal wave.
A new religion in the world appears,
And for her awful rites new altars rears:
The band are Christians soon proclaim'd by Fame,
So call'd from Christ, their mighty hero's name.
On earth a golden age beams from the skies,
And beauteous years in fair succession rise.

T H E E N D.